



Ben. Ferrers Pinx.

A. J. Gucht Sculp.

*William Beveridge D.D.
Lord Bishop of S^t. Asaph.
Ætatis sue 71.*

THE
Dignity, Office,
AND
AUTHORITY
OF THE
PRIESTHOOD.
BEING
SERMONS

Preach'd by the Right Rev^d Father
in GOD,

WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, D. D.
Late Lord Bishop of St. *ASAPH.*

Printed from his Original Manuscripts.

L O N D O N;

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THE
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

THE Right Reverend the late
Bishop of St. *Asaph*, having
left several *Sermons* and other *Trea-*
tises on Divine Subjects, written and
Corrected with his own Hand; I,
whom he was pleased to make his
Executor, think my self under an in-
dispensable Obligation to make them
publick, both in Justice to the Author,
and to the World. For though the
great Modesty of that Reverend Pre-
late,

The P R E F A C E.

late, which was equal to his Learning and other Virtues, would not suffer him in his Life time to publish many things in *English*; yet it would not be decent or fitting in me, who have had such great Obligations to him, to stifle his learned Labours, and to deprive his Memory of the Honour that will redound to it by the Publication of his Excellent and Pious Writings. Neither could I answer it to the World, to deprive the Church of *England* of so valuable a Treasure of Piety and Learning, which, I doubt not, will much more enrich the Church, than the Legacy of Money which his Lordship in great Charity left to it. For these Discourses explain its Doctrines, vindicate its Ceremonies and Discipline, with that pure and holy Zeal, and with that Clearness and Strength of Reason; that a serious and impartial Perusal of them will, by the Blessing of God, animate and confirm

The P R E F A C E.

firm its Friends, and gain over its greatest Enemies, to the Love and Admiration of its Establishment and Constitution.

Though this Prelate had lived long enough for himself, having arrived at a great Age, yet he lived too short a time for the Church, to which he was a great Ornament, and a sincere and constant Friend in all Circumstances. And we have great Reason to be very thankful to the Divine Providence, which having deprived the Church of his living Labours, hath yet left it the means of profiting by his Preaching and Instructions.

Timothy Gregory.

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SERMON I.

MATTH. XXVIII. 20.

And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.

WE are here assembled in the Name and in the Presence of Jesus Christ our Lord, and not only ours, but the Lord of the whole World, having absolute and supreme Dominion over the whole Creation ; not only as he is God, and the Creator of all things, but likewise as Man too: His humane Nature by reason of its Union to the Divine Person, and its perfect Obedience to the Divine Will, being exalted above, and invested with Power over all other Creatures whatsoever. For even as he is the Son of Man, *There is given him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom*

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dom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him, Dan. 7. And he having humbled himself, and become obedient to Death, even the death upon the Cross, therefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in the Earth, and things under the Earth, and that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father, Phil. 2. Hence we find the holy Angels themselves waiting upon him at his Birth, in the Wilderness, in his Agony, and at his Resurrection, when they also acknowledg'd him to be the Lord, saying, Come and see the place where the Lord lay, Matth. 28. 6. Yea, all the Angels of God worship him, and are commanded so to do, Heb. 1. 6. And as for this lower World, he hath the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession, Psal. 2. He hath Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the ends of the Earth, All Kings are bound to fall down before him, and all Nations to serve him. Psal 72.

All Creatures therefore, both in Heaven and Earth, are now subject to our Lord Christ, and he orders, governs, and disposeth of them all according to his own Will and Pleasure, and so as shall most conduce

duce to his own Glory, and his Church's Good. For God having *raised him from the Dead, hath set him at his own right hand, far above all Principality and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also, that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and made him Head over all things to the Church, which is his Boay, the Fulness of him that filleth all in all, Eph. 1.* He is the Head therefore not only of the Church, but over all things to or for the Church: So that nothing is exempted from his Dominion; nothing in Heaven, in Earth, or Hell, but what is subject to his Power; and therefore, nothing but what he can do for his own Catholick Church, which he hath purchased with his own Blood. He can assist it with his Grace, sanctify it by his Spirit, protect it by his Power, he can make all things in Heaven and Earth work together for its present Peace and future Glory, maugre all the Opposition that Men or Devils can make against it.

Thus much I thought good to premise concerning our Lord's Power, in order to the Explication of the Words which I have now read, because he himself thought so when he spake them. For being now about to send his Apostles into the World, to preach and propagate the Gospel which

he had planted, he first shews them, as it were, his own Commission ; acquainting them with the Power he had to send them, and that in such Words as comprehend all that I have said concerning it, yea, as much as Words are able to express. *All Power*, saith he, *is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth, Go ye therefore and teach all Nations*, &c. ver. 18. 19. As if he should have said, I have now all Power over all things in the World, conferred upon me, by virtue whereof I command, empower, and commissionate you to enlarge, settle, and govern the Church that I have founded ; to administer the Sacraments that I have instituted ; and to persuade Mankind to embrace my Doctrine, to submit to my Discipline, to obey my Laws, and to come up to the Terms which I have procured for them, and propounded to them, in order to their Salvation.

Go ye therefore, says he, *and teach all Nations* : or as the Word *μαθητεύσατε* properly signifies, *Make all Nations my Disciples, bring them over to my Religion, that both Jews and Gentiles may become one Flock under me, the great Shepherd and Bishop of their Souls*. And this saith he, I would have you do two ways, *First, by Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, and so initiating them into my Church, upon

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on their consenting to the Faith which I have published to the World. And Secondly, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, that so they may be my Disciples indeed, and not only by an outward Profession of the Faith which I have taught them, but likewise by performing sincere and universal Obedience to all the Commands that I have laid upon them.

When our Saviour gave this Charge to his Apostles, we may easily imagine that they were strangely surprized at the hearing of it. As when God bad *Moses* go and bring the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, *Moses* said unto him, *who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the Children of Israel out of Egypt?* *Exod. 3.*

11. So when our Lord bad his Apostles go and bring all Nations out of their Idolatries and Superstitions, into the Profession of his Religion, the Apostles certainly could not but wonder at it, and say, at least, within themselves, Who are we, a company of poor, weak and illiterate Men, that we should go to all Nations, that we should bring them off from the Religions of their Forefathers, and that we should ever persuade the World to believe in a crucified Christ? This our Lord foresaw, and therefore, as God answered *Moses*, saying, *certainly I will be*

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with

with thee; so does our Saviour here encourage his Apostles, saying, *And behold, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World.*

Words of very great Importance to us all, to the whole Church of God, especially to the Governours of it, and to those that administer the Word and Sacraments in it. For as much as all the Success that can be expected from the Execution of any Ecclesiastical Function, depends upon the performance of this Promise, which therefore our Lord has so Worded, that there is not a Word in it but what hath its Emphasis, and is much to be observed by us. As he himself seems to intimate, by prefacing it with *isē*, Behold, take special Notice of what I now say unto you.

Hence therefore we shall *First*, very briefly consider the Words apart, that so we may come to the better understanding of the whole. *First*, saith he, *I am with you*, I, the eternal Son of God, and now become the Son of Man too; I, who have the Angels at my beck, and make the the Devils tremble with my Looks; I, who in your sight have caused the Storms to cease, the Blind to see, the Lame to walk, the Dead to rise, only with a Word of my Mouth; I, who was delivered for your Offences, but
am

am now rais'd again for your Justification ; I, who have all Power both in Heeaven and Earth committed to me ; I am with you. Not I will be with, but I am with you, in the Present Tense, minding them thereby of his Divine Essence and Power, to which all things are present. And therefore, as he elsewhere saith, *Before Abraham was I am*, So here I am with you at all times to the end of the World, as really as at this present.

And then it follows, I am μεθ' υμῶν, with you my Apostles. For that these Words were spoken, and this Promise made only to the Apostles, is plain, from that the Eleven only are said to be present at this time, Ver. 16. And that besides this Promise is made only to those who now received Commission to go and convert all Nations to the Christian Faith, to baptize and teach Mankind the Commands of Christ ; which Commission being granted only to the Apostles, this Promise also, annexed to it, must needs belong to them only. But then we must observe likewise, that as it belongs to them only, so it belongs to them all alike. *I am with you*, saith he, not with *Peter* only, or any one or more of you, but with you all equally, one as well as another. Yea, saith he, *I am with you*, παντα τὰς ἡμέρας, every day, where-
B 4
foever

soever you are, whensoever you do any thing towards the executing the Commission which I have now given you, I am with you in the doing of it. And that too, *ὡς τὸ αὐτελείας τῶ ἀῶν*, to the very end of the World; that is, so long as I have a Church upon Earth, which shall be till my coming again to judge the World: all this while I promise to be with you, and therefore as long as the World shall last.

The Words being thus explained apart, that we may rightly apprehend our Lord's Meaning in the whole, there are two things to be considered: *First*, in what Sense the Apostles were to continue to the end of the World. *Secondly*, in what Sense our Saviour here promises to be with them all that while.

As for the *First*, it is plain, that our Saviour here supposeth that Apostles were to continue upon Earth to the end of the World, for otherwise it would be impossible for him to be with them so long, and by consequence to perform this Promise to them. But it is as plain likewise, that the Persons to whom our Saviour speaks these Words; were not to be here so long, being all long ago dead. And therefore I do not see how we can possibly understand the Words in any other Sense than this, even that our Lord spake them to his Apostles,
not

not as private Persons, as *Peter, James, or John*, &c. but as Apostles, as Persons now placed by him in an Office, that should always continue in his Church. So that the Promise is made not so much to the Persons of the Apostles, as to the Office Apostolical; or at least to their Persons only as vested with that Office, and by Consequence to all Persons, to the end of the World, that should ever have that Office conferred upon them.

For our better understanding of this, we must consider what it is properly to be an Apostle of Christ, or wherein the Office purely Apostolical, consisted. For which we must know, that those which the Scriptures, and we from them, call Apostles, had many extraordinary Privileges granted to them, which were not Essential to their Office, nor peculiar to them as Apostles, but common to them with other Disciples, and therefore were to die with them. As for Example, were they called immediately by Christ himself? So were the Seventy, who were the Ear and Eye Witnesses of what Christ taught and did: So were many others as well as they. Were they Divinely inspired to speak all manner of Languages? to foretel things to come? to work Miracles to confirm their Doctrine? So were they which were no Apostles

ftles, as well as they that were. And therefore fuch things as thefe, cannot be look'd upon as any part of the Apoftolical Office, but only as extraordinary Favours and Privileges vouchsafed to the Perfons of the Apoftles.

But the Office, properly Apoftolical, confifted only in fuch things as had an immediate Reference, to the propagating, edifying, and governing of the Church in all Ages. Indeed, our Saviour himfelf gives the Apoftles a particular Description of their Office, in the very Commiffion he here grants them for the Execution of it; Commanding them to convert all Nations to his Religion, to adminifter the Sacraments to them, and to teach them all things that he had commanded them. Under which is contained whatfoever is neceffary to the Inftitution and Government of his Church in all Ages; as the Ordaining Perfons to do it, cenfuring thofe who refufe Inftitution, comforting and encouraging thofe who receive it, and the like. This was properly the Office Apoftolical, which therefore was not to die with the Perfons of the Apoftles, but was to be tranfmitted by them to all after Ages, as our Lord himfelf intimates in the very Description of it. For he here bids his Apoftles go and make all Nations his Difciples: which it is plain, the

the Persons he spake these Words to, neither did, nor ever could accomplish, being to continue, as we know they did, but a little while upon Earth, wherein it was impossible for them to go over all Nations, much more to persuade them all to embrace the Christian Faith. And therefore this Command it self, as well as the Promise, must needs be so understood, as to be given not only to the Persons of the Apostles then present, but to all that should succeed them in that Office to the end of the World. So that from this very Command, we reasonably conclude, that these Words were meant not only of the Apostles themselves, but of their Successors in that Office all along, until all Nations have received the Gospel of Christ. Much more if we consider the Promise annexed to it, *And lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World*, which cannot possibly be fulfilled, unless there be Apostles, or Persons vested with the Apostolical Office, alway unto the end of the World.

Hence therefore it was, that the Apostles, having received this Command and Promise from our Lord, and understanding from thence that it was his Pleasure that they should transfer their Office to all future Ages, by ordaining others into it; took care to do it. For besides the
Eleven

Eleven, to whom these Words were spoken, we find *Matthias*, *Paul* and *Barnabas* admitted into the same Office, and expressly call'd Apostles as well as they. So is *Ephroditus*, Bishop of *Philippi*, called by St. *Paul* himself. *Phil.* 2. And if we consult the antient Records of the Church, we shall there find, that *James* Bishop of *Hierusalem*, *Mark* of *Alexandria*, *Timothy* of *Ephesus*, *Titus* of *Crete*, and *Clemens* of *Rome*, were all called Apostles. And as *Theodoret* observes τῆς νυνὶ καλεμῆνης Ἐπισκοπῆς, Ἀποστόλης ὀνόμαζον, those which we now call Bishops the Primitive Christians called Apostles. And so indeed may all Bishops, rightly ordained, be called, as having the same Office in Church which the Apostles had. And therefore the Office which *Matthias* was chosen into, is called ἐπισκοπή, the Office of a Bishop, *Acts* 1. 19. Hence St. *Cyprian* sometimes calls Bishops by the name of Apostles, sometimes Apostles by the name of Bishops. And the reason is, because Bishops, as St. *Hierom* expresses it, *Apostolorum locum tenent*, they supply the place of the Apostles. Hence also, not only St. *Cyprian*, but *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, assert Bishops to be the Apostles Successors, and reckon up the Succession of several of them from the Apostles themselves. And St. *Hierom* himself, having affirmed all Bishops

shops of whatsoever City, great or small, to be *ejusdem meriti, ejusdem & sacerdotii*, he adds, *ceterum omnes Apostolorum successores sunt*, they are all Successors to the Apostles.

And therefore whatsoever our Lord said to the Apostles, as such, all succeeding Apostles or Bishops are obliged by it, as well as they : As St. Cyprian observed long ago, saying, *Christus qui dicit ad Apostolos, ac per hoc ad omnes prepositos, qui Apostolis vicariâ ordinatione succedunt*. For the Office is the same now as it was then. So that in the Apostles Days, and in all after Ages, and in all places of the World, as the same Father words it, *Episcopatus unus est, cujus à singulis in solidum pars tenetur*. There is but one Episcopacy, but one Episcopal Office, a part whereof is wholly possessed by every Bishop. Which, as it quite overthrows the Supremacy which the Bishop of Rome pretends to over all other Bishops, so it sufficiently proves the true Sense and Meaning of the Words in my Text. For seeing the Office is still one and the same now which it was in the Apostles days, and so will continue to the end of the World ; so that seeing there always will be such Apostles in the Church, our Saviour speaking to the Eleven as Apostles, might well say, *Lo, I am with you to the end of the World*.

Having

Having thus discovered in what Sense the Apostles were to continue in the Church to the end of the World; we are now to consider in what Sense our Lord here promises to be always with them. To find out which, we need not have recourse to the wild and extravagant Opinion of the *Ubiquetarians*, asserting the humane Nature of Christ to be every where present. Neither is it sufficient to observe that his Divine Essence is present with them. For so it is with every Creature, no Creature being able to subsist without it: Whereas our Saviour here promiseth to be with his Apostles in some such peculiar Sense, as can belong only to them, and to them only as his Apostles. And that we might not be mistaken in a matter of such Consequence as this, he himself hath elsewhere explain'd himself, and left upon Record how these Words are to be understood. For, as he here promises his Apostles that he will be with them to the end of the World; so he elsewhere tells them, that his holy Spirit shall be always with them. *And I will pray the Father, saith he, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. John 14. 16.* which is the same in Effect with his own being always with them. For the Spirit proceeding from the Son, as well as from the Father,

Father, and being of the same Nature and Essence with him, *Wheresoever the Spirit is, there is Christ also.* So that in short, our Saviour here promiseth his Apostles, that he will be always with them to the end of the World, by his holy Spirit, accompanying and assisting of them in the Discharge of their Apostolical Office. In the Discharge, I say, of their Apostolical Office. For we are still to remember what I observed before, even that these Words were spoken to the Apostles and their Successors, only as such : And therefore Christ's Presence with them by his holy Spirit here promised, cannot be understood only of his illuminating, or sanctifying, or comforting Presence, which he vouchsafeth to all Believers as well as unto them ; but it must be understood in such a Sense as is proper to the Apostles, Pastors and Governours of his Church in all Ages : which in brief, amounts to no more nor less than this, even that Christ having constituted such an Office in his Church, for the Government and Edification of it to the end of the World ; He here promiseth that he himself, by his holy Spirit, will be always present at the Execution of it, so as to make it effectual to the great Ends and Purposes for which it was designed.

To explain this more fully to you, it
will

will be necessary to instance in the several parts of the Apostolical Office, and to shew how Christ, according to his Promise, is always present by his Spirit at the Performance of them. Now the *First* and principal part of this Office, is the Ordaining others into it, and giving them Power to ordain others, and so successively to the end of the World ; which is necessarily supposed in the Promise it self, as that without which it could never be fulfilled.

The *First* therefore that were ordained in this Office, were ordained by Christ himself. The form and manner of which Ordination is set down, *John* 20. 21. where it is said that Christ, coming to his Apostles, said to them, *Peace be with you, as the Father hath sent me, so send I you. And having said this, he breathed, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost.* Where we may plainly see how our Saviour would be with his Apostles, after his Body was removed from them, even by his holy Spirit, which he therefore breaths from himself into them, by that means consecrating them his Apostles and Vicegerents upon Earth. Telling them withal, that as the Father sent him, so he sent them. Whereby he certifies them, that whatsoever Power he had received from the Father, for the
the

the Instruction and Government of his Church, he now left the same with them, or rather with the holy Spirit which he breathed into them. And by consequence, that as he sent them, so were they to send others, by conferring the Spirit upon them, and so from one to another all along, that the Spirit which they now received, might continue with them and their Successors, and so supply his place upon Earth, until his coming again.

Hence the Apostles, being thus ordained and instructed by our Lord, took special Care to transfer the same Spirit to others, which they had received from him. But this they could not do after the same manner as Christ had done it to them, even by breathing upon them. For that way was peculiar to Christ, from whom the Spirit proceedeth. Wherefore they, being doubtless directed thereto by the same Spirit, transmitted it to others by laying their Hands upon them; which was the old way which had been used in the Church before. For so *Moses* communicated the Spirit of Wisdom to *Josbua*, thereby constituting him his Successor in the Government of *Israel*, even by laying his Hands upon him, *Deut. 34*. Thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ordained by the special appointment of the Holy Ghost himself,

self, *Acts* 13. 3. For it is said, That they having fasted and prayed, laid their Hands upon them, and so sent them out : Who thereupon are said in the next Verse to be sent by the Holy Ghost ; it being now conferred upon them by the Imposition of Hands. Thus St. *Paul* communicated, *χαρισμῶ τε δέω*, as he calls it, the Gift of the Spirit unto *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. And wheresoever we read that the Apostles ordained any, they still did it after this manner, even by laying their Hands upon them : and that too, whether they ordained them into their whole Office, or else into any part of it. For the whole Care of the Church being committed unto them, they had Power to constitute what Officers they thought fit under them. But still they did it by laying their Hands upon them, and so communicating of the same Spirit unto them, which they had received from Christ. As when they found it necessary to have *Deacons* in the Church, to take Care of the Widows, they ordained them, by laying their Hands upon them, *Acts* 6. 6. thereby transferring so much of the Spirit upon them, as was necessary for that Office. And when they afterwards saw it very necessary that there should be other Officers in the Church, which we now call *Presbyters*, that should

have

have Power under them to preach the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments in places where they themselves could not be always present ; upon these also they laid their Hands, and by that means communicated so much of the Spirit unto them, as was necessary for the due and effectual Execution of the said Office.

Thus therefore it is, that the Apostolical Office hath been handed down from one to another ever since the Apostles days to our time, and so will be to the end of the World, Christ himself being continually present at such Imposition of Hands, thereby transferring the same Spirit, which he at first breathed into his Apostles, upon others successively after them, as really as he was present with the Apostles themselves, when he first breathed it into them. Infomuch, that they who are thus ordained, are said to be made Bishops by the Holy Ghost himself, as well as the Apostles were, *Acts. 20. ver. 28.* By which means the Holy Catholick Church always hath been, and still is truly Apostolical, as it is called in the *Nicene Creed.* And the several parts of the Apostolical Office are now as effectually performed by their Successors, and others ordained under them, as they were while the Apostles themselves lived. For it was not the Persons of the

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Apostles,

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Apostles, but their Office, influenced and assisted by the Spirit of God, that made the Sacraments they administered to be valid, and their Preaching of the Gospel so prevalent upon those that heard it. Though *Paul* himself planted, and *Apollos* watered, it was God only that gave the Increase.

And so it is to this Day. All the Efficacy that there is or can be in the Administration of any Ecclesiastical Office, depends altogether upon the Spirit of God, going along with the Office, and assisting at the Execution of it. Without which, the Sacraments we administer would be but empty Signs, and our preaching no more than beating of the Air. Whereas on the other side, Christ, according to his Promise, being always present by his holy Spirit, at the Administration of the several Offices which he has ordained in his Church, they can never fail of their designed Effect, if the Persons to whom they are administered, be but rightly disposed and qualified for it. By this means they that are duly baptized, are *born again, not only of Water, but of the Spirit also*, *John 3. 5.* and so together with the *Laver of Regeneration*, they have the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, *Tit. 3. 5.* Hence also in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the worthy Receiver does really by Faith partake
of

of the Mystical Body and Blood of Christ, and of such Influences of the holy Spirit as shall enable him to walk as becomes a Member of Christ. And whensoever we read, preach, or publish the Gospel as Christ taught it, the holy Spirit goes along with it, so that it becomes the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth. And seeing our Lord thus continually accompanies the Apostles and their Successors, so as to vouchsafe his Spirit to those on whom they lay their Hands, and to co-operate by the same Spirit with those who are so ordained by them, in their Administration of the Word and Sacraments. Hence, he may well be said to be always with them, according to the Promise he makes them in my Text.

But besides that Imposition of Hands, whereby the Apostles transmitted the Spirit they had received, together with their Apostolical Office, down to succeeding Ages, we find them sometimes laying their Hands on Believers baptized, that thereby the Holy Ghost might come upon them, not with respect to any Office, but only to confirm and strengthen them in the Christian Faith.

For when the *Samaritans* had received the Word of God, and were baptized by *Philip*, who was no Apostle, but only a

Deacon, the Apostles at *Hierusalem* hearing of it, sent *Peter* and *John* unto them, who having laid their Hands upon them, they received the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 8. *Philip* indeed having had the Apostles Hands laid upon him, had thereby received Power to baptize them with Water and the Holy Ghost: But it seems he had no Power to lay his Hands upon them, and by that means to confer any greater measure of the Spirit upon them. No, that was to be done only by the Apostles themselves: who therefore sent two of their own Body, as far as from *Hierusalem* to *Samaria*, on purpose to do it, which certainly they would never have done, had this been an useless Ceremony, or if *Philip* or any one under an Apostle could have done it. So that this Instance is, of it self, sufficient to prove that this was an Act peculiar to the Apostolical Office. And that our Saviour, according to his Promise, was really present at the performance of it; seeing the Apostles had no sooner laid their Hands upon them, but they immediately received the Holy Ghost. Another Instance of the same Nature we find, *Acts* 19. where *St. Paul* being at *Ephesus*, and finding some Disciples there, baptized only with the Baptism of *John*, he laid his Hands upon them, and so they received the Holy Ghost.

Hence

Hence, the Catholick Church in all Ages, hath not only retained this Apostolical Rite, which we now call *Confirmation*, but hath always esteemed it an essential part of the Apostolical Office, and therefore to be performed by none but the Apostles themselves and their Successors, to the end of the World. And therefore it was the antient and constant Custom of the Primitive Church, as it is ours, for the Bishop of every Diocese to go into the lesser Cities and Villages belonging to him, and there lay his Hands upon those who were baptized by Priests or Deacons, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. As we learn from St. *Hierome* himself, whose words are, *Non abnuo hanc esse Ecclesiarum consuetudinem, ut ad eos qui minoribus urbibus per Presbyteros & Diaconos baptizati sunt, Episcopus ad invocationem sancti Spiritus manus impositurus excurrat.*

And therefore how any Bishops in our Days, dare neglect so considerable a part of their Office, I know not, but fear they will have no good Account to give of it, when they come to stand before our Lord's Tribunal. And as for others who, contrary to the Practice of the Primitive Christians, either refuse or neglect Confirmation, when they may have it administered to them, they have just Cause to suspect

that they have no good Sense of Religion, nor Regard for the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, for if they had, they would use all means for the attainment thereof; especially this, which hath been found effectual for that end by the Catholick and Apostolick Church in all Ages, where Persons have been duly prepared for it. Our Lord being, according to his Promise in my Text, always present at the performance of this, as well as of any other part of the Apostolical Office.

There is one thing still behind, which we must by no means omit, especially upon this Occasion: And that is the Power of governing the Church, which our Lord left with his Apostles and their Successors, to the end of the World; but so that he, according to his Promise, is always present with them at the Execution of it. For this Power is granted to them in the very Charter to which this Promise is annexed. For here our Lord gives them Commission not only to baptize, but likewise to teach those who are his Disciples, to observe whatsoever he had commanded. Whereby they are empowered both to declare what are those Commands of Christ which Men ought to observe, and also to use all Means to prevail upon Men to observe them. Such as are, correcting and punishing those who
violate

violate, rewarding and encouraging those which keep them. But our Saviour's Kingdom being, as himself saith, not of this World, but purely Spiritual ; he hath authorized his Substitutes in the Government of it, to use Rewards and Punishments of the same Nature ; even to admonish Delinquents in his Name to forsake their Sins, and if they continue Obstinate, and neglect such Admonitions, to excommunicate, or cast them out of his Church ; and, upon their Repentance, to absolve and receive them in again. This Power our Saviour first promised to St. Peter, and in him to the rest of the Apostles *Matth. 16*. But it was not actually conferred upon them, till after his Resurrection, when having breathed, he said unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost : Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted to them, and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained, John 20*. As if he should have said, I, the Son of Man, having Power upon Earth also to forgive Sins, do now commit the same to you ; so that whose Sins soever are remitted or retained by you, are so by me also. And from whence it is plain, both that the Apostles received Power to remit and retain Sins ; and that Christ himself concurs with them in the Exercise of that Power, and how he doth it, even by his holy Spirit now breathed into them.

To

To explain the full Extent and Latitude of this Power, would require more time than can be allowed upon this Day, whereon 'tis to be exercised : and therefore I shall observe only two things concerning it, whereof the *First* is, that how great soever the Power be, which our Lord committed to his Apostles, and their Successors, for the Government of his Church in all Ages, it is but Ministerial ; they act only under him, as his Ministers and Stewards, and must one day give an Account to him of all their Actions. Yea, whatsoever Power they have of this Nature, it is still his Power in their Hands, they derive it continually from him, who is always present with them. And therefore, as they themselves need to have a care how they exert this Power, or neglect the exerting of it ; so others had need to take care too, that they neither resist nor despise it.

The other Thing I would observe unto you, is, that for the better Execution of this Power, it hath been the constant Custom of the Apostles, and their Successors in all Ages, to visit the Churches committed to their Charge ; to enquire into the Faith and Manners, both of the Clergy and Laity that are under them ; and to use so much of their Authority, and give such Orders
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as they found necessary for the due Observation of their Lord's Commands. Thus we find the Apostles frequently visiting the Churches they had planted; and St. Paul particularly keeping a solemn Visitation at *Miletus*, where he sent for the Elders of *Ephesus* and of all *Asia*, (as *Irenaeus* affirms, and the Context it self proves) and summoned them to appear before him there, where he gave them many Apostolical Admonitions and Directions how to feed the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers, *Acts* 20. Afterwards, we find it recorded in Ecclesiastical History, that St. *John* often visited the *Asiatick* Churches, as his peculiar Province. And I do not question, but where we read of *Pinytus* Bishop of *Gnossus*, and *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, laying their Commands upon their Clergy, in the first Ages of the Church, it was at such a Visitation as this. And we cannot doubt of St. *Cyprian's* Care in this Particular, so long as he resided upon his Bishoprick, seeing that in his very Recess, when he was forced to retire, he visited them, as himself saith, by his Letters, sending several both to the Clergy and Laity, still extant in his Works, wherein he sometimes reprove, sometimes admonishes and directs them how to carry and behave themselves in that Juncture.

Indeed,

Indeed, this is so necessary to the discharging of the Episcopal or Apostolical Office, that it cannot be imagined, that ever any conscientious Bishop durst neglect it. Insomuch, that for several Ages after the Apostles, we have no Ecclesiastical Law or Canon, as I remember, about Episcopal Visitations, because there was no need of them till about the sixth or seventh Century, when there were several Canons made concerning the time and manner of keeping them. As the sixth Council at *Arles* decreed, that every Bishop should go about his Diocese once every Year. *Ivo* quotes an antient Canon of the second Council at *Sevil*, that every Bishop shall once a Year go about his Diocese, and confirm and teach the People. The second Council at *Braga* in *Portugal* decreed, that Bishops in their Visitations should instruct their Clergy how to administer the Sacrament. The fourth at *Toledo*, that they shall then enquire into the Fabrick of their several Churches, and examine what Repairs they wanted. Another at *Augusta Vindeliroxum*, or *Ausburg* as some think, as others at *Ratisbone* in *Germany*; decreed, that when the Bishop goes about his Diocese to confirm the People, the Presbyters shall be always ready to attend him. There are several other Canons, enjoining Bishops

to visit at least once a Year, and directing them what to do at their Visitations, but none that I know of that they shall visit in general. The Church taking it for granted all along, that no Bishop would totally omit so necessary a part of his Duty, but would some time, and after some manner or other, visit the Diocese that belonged to him, which certainly none can chuse but do, who considers either the Account he must one day give of his Stewardship, or the Encouragement our Lord himself has given him to do it, in that he hath promis'd to be always with him in the Discharge of his Office, saying to his Apostles and their Successors for ever, *Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World.*

Now the Promises being duly weighed, even that our Lord himself is always present by his holy Spirit with his Apostles and their Successors in the Execution of the Apostolical Office. Many useful Inferences might be thence deduced. I shall instance in some few, which I hope will not be altogether unworthy of your Consideration at this time.

Hence therefore, in the *First* place, I observe, how much we are all bound to acknowledge the Goodness, to praise, magnify, and adore the Name of the most high God, in that we were born and bred, and still

still live in a Church wherein the Apostolical Line hath, through all Ages, been preserved entire, there having been a constant Succession of such Bishops in it, as were truly and properly Successors to the Apostles, by virtue of that Apostolical Imposition of Hands; which being begun by the Apostles, hath been continued from one to another ever since their time down to ours. By which means, the same Spirit, which was breathed by our Lord into his Apostles, is, together with their Office, transmitted to their lawful Successors, the Pastors and Governours of our Church at this time, and acts, moves, and assists at the Administration of the several parts of the Apostolical Office in our Days, as much as ever. From whence it follows, that the means of Grace, which we now enjoy, are in themselves as powerful and effectual as they were in the Apostles Days, And if they prove not always so Successful now as they were then, that cannot be imputed to any want of Efficacy in them, but to some Defect or other in those which use them. For they who are duly prepared, cannot but always find the same Effect from them, because there is always the same Cause, even the Spirit of God moving upon his Word and Sacraments, when administred by our Church, as well
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as when administred by the Apostles, to whom it was first given.

And here it may not be amiss to observe, what I have often thought of, not without Admiration, how strangely the Spirit of the Apostles hath run through our Church, all along, ever since the Reformation, diffusing it self from the Head, which first received it, into all her real Members, as may easily be seen, not only in the Discipline of our Church, but likewise in its Doctrine, manner of Worship, Patience under Sufferings, universal Charity, and particularly in its Loyalty and Submission to the Civil Magistrate; which the Apostles, assisted by the Spirit of God, did not only press upon others, but practiced themselves. And the same Spirit hath enabled our Church constantly to do the same. Insomuch, that Malice it self could never fasten any thing of Rebellion upon our Church, as now constituted, nor upon any of her Members that lived faithfully in her Communion. Many of them have suffer'd Imprisonment, Sequestration, yea Martyrdom it self, as the Apostles did; and yet all have been as free from Rebellion and Treason as they were; which to me is a great Instance of the same Spirit still working in in our Church, which wrought so effectually upon them.

And

S E R M O N I.

And this I verily believe is the great Reason, why the Devil hath such a Spite at our Church, still stirring up Adversaries of all sorts against it; Papists on the one Hand, and Sectaries on the other, and all if possible to destroy it; even because the Spirit, which is ministred in it, is so contrary to his Nature, and so destructive of his Kingdom, that he can never expect to domineer and tyrannize over the People of the Land, so long as such a Church is settled among them, and they continue firm to it. And therefore seeing he cannot, by all his secret Plots and Contrivances, totally overthrow it, he still uses the utmost of his Skill and Power to draw as many as he can from its Communion, and so make them Schismatics, that so being separated from the Body, they may not partake of the Spirit that is in it, nor, by consequence, receive any Benefit from this Promise of our Blessed Saviour to the Governours of his Catholick and Apostolick Church in all Ages, *Lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the World.*

The next thing I would observe unto you from what we have now discoursed of, concerns us of the Clergy, who are entrusted with any part of the Apostolical Office. For being ordained by those who succeeded the Apostles in a direct Line,
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by the Imposition of their Hands upon us, we received not only Power to administer the Word and Sacraments, but likewise the Spirit of Christ to accompany and influence such Administrations: By whom therefore, Christ himself is always present with us, whensoever we are employ'd in the Work that he hath set us. Which Consideration, methinks, should strike an Awe and Terror into us, and make us dread the Thoughts of doing the Work of our Lord negligently. And therefore whether we Minister unto him in the publick *Liturgy* of our Church, Read or Preach his Holy Word, or Administer his Blessed Sacraments; let us be all perswaded to have an especial Care that we do it, not after a careless or perfunctory Manner, but with all that Reverence and Godly Fear, with that Earnestness and Devotion, with that Seriousness and Intention of Mind, as as becomes those who believe that our Lord himself is always present with us, not only to take notice of what we do, but to Bless and Sanctifie it to the Salvation of Mens immortal Souls.

Hence also it concerns us all, to carry and behave our selves at all times to the utmost of our Power, as becometh the Ministers of Christ: to whom the Eternal Son of God hath vouchsafed so high an Honour,

Honour, as not only to employ us in his own immediate Service, but likewise to reside himself continually with us. And therefore, seeing he is pleased to Honour us with his own Presence, let us endeavour to Honour him him too, by walking in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life. Especially, let us take all the Care we can to avoid whatsoever is offensive to him, or unworthy of that high and heavenly Calling in which he hath plac'd us. It is true, the Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments, is not impeded by the Wickedness or Unworthiness of him, by whom they are Administred, as our Church hath rightly determined ; because that depends not upon the Person, but the Office and Christ's Promise to it. But howsoever, it behoves us, who attend continually upon him, to walk in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless, lest otherwise we bring a Scandal upon our Profession, and give too much occasion to the Enemies of our Lord to Blaspheme his most Sacred Name. Especially, considering what a sad and dismal thing it would be, if we, who are employ'd by Christ to perswade others to obey his Gospel, should not obey it our selves, and so not save our selves as well as those that hear us : but be Instruments in God's Hand to bring others to Heaven,

Heaven and yet we our selves be cast down to Hell. Which is not only possible, but impossible to be avoided, unless we look very narrowly to our selves: I am sure St. Paul, thought so, and therefore saith, *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have Preach'd unto others, I myself should become a castaway,* 1 Cor. 9. 27. And if so great an Apostle was forc'd to take so much pains with himself, lest when he had Preach'd Salvation unto others, he himself should not attain it, what Cause have you and I to do so? But our Comfort is, that our Lord is always present with us, and therefore we can never want Assistance from him, if we be not first wanting to our selves.

Hoping therefore, that this Consideration of Christ's Promise to us, will have its desir'd effect upon us of the Clergy; I shall in the next place shew what use others also may, and ought to make of it. And for that end, shall apply my self unto you all. Seeing therefore, that our Lord hath Promised to be with his Apostles and their Successors to the end of the World: Seeing the Succession of the Office Apostolical, hath without interruption been continued in our Church to this Day. And seeing therefore that Christ according to his Promise, is alway present by his Holy Spirit

at the Word and Sacraments, as Administred by our Church, to quicken, actuate, and make them effectual to the Salvation of our Souls; hence in his Name, and for his Sake, and your own too, I humbly pray and beseech you all, that you would take all the opportunities you can, to meet your Lord and Saviour in the publick Offices of the Church, to which he hath thus promised his peculiar Presence. And think it not enough to be there, but consider all the while in whose Presence you are, and deport your selves accordingly. And while we Read or Preach the Gospel, call upon you, exhort and pray you to observe whatsoever Christ hath Commanded, still remember the Apostles words, that *we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God,* 2 Cor. 5. 20. And therefore receive it not as the word of Man, but, as it is indeed, the Word of God himself.

Above all things, take heed, that you have not Mens Persons in admiration, so as to think the Word and Sacraments one jot the better or worse, because Administred by one Person rather than another. For they that do so, it is evident, that they regard the Person more than the Office, and then it is no wonder if they receive no bene-

benefit or advantage from it. For all the hopes and expectations that we have or can have, from the exercise of any Ecclesiastical Office, by whomsoever perform'd, are grounded only upon Christ's Promise to the Office it self, to be present with it by his Holy Spirit ; without which, all the fine Words and Phrases in the World, can never mortifie one Lust, nor convert one Soul to God and Goodness. And therefore ye, whensoever you address your selves to the publick Prayers of our Church, to hear God's Word Read, or Preach'd, or to receive the Holy Sacrament, still keep the Eye of your Faith fix'd upon Christ, as there really present, according to his Promise, ready to dispense his Heavenly Blessings, by his Holy Spirit, working together with the Ordinance, to make it accomplish the end of its Institution, even your Sanctification in this World, and your Eternal Salvation in the World to come. Do but observe these few Rules, in all your solemn Devotions as perform'd by that part of the Catholick Church, which by the Blessing of Almighty God is settled amongst you, and then I dare assure you in the Name of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ, that you will all experience the Truth of what you have now heard, even that Christ is always present with his Apostles in the

discharge of their Office to the end of the World.

Moreover, from the Premises duly weighed, you may all very easily observe, what reason you all have, to continue stedfast in the Communion of our Church, wherein the Word and Sacraments are so powerfully and effectually Administred, and not to deviate from her, either into Popery on the one hand, or Schism on the other. For, as for Popery, altho' we do not deny but that the Apostolical Succession hath been continued in the Church of *Rome*, yet we cannot but affirm also, that they have made very bad use of it, or rather have most egregiously abused it, having clogged the several Offices with so many superstitious Ceremonies, that they quench the Spirit which should enflame, and quicken them, or else perform them so imperfectly and irregularly, that they are not the same that were instituted by Christ, and so not capable of having this Promise fulfilled to them. I shall instance only in two, the Reading of the Scriptures, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

As for the first, The publick and solemn Reading of the Word of God, by a Minister of Christ, lawfully ordain'd and appointed thereunto, I look upon it as a thing
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of much greater consequence, than it is commonly thought to be: Yea, I cannot but reckon it amongst the most useful and prevalent means of Grace that we do or can enjoy. For altho' it be our Duty to read the Scriptures in Private, which I hope you all do, yet none of you but may find by experience, that a Chapter once read in Publick, as before describ'd, is of greater force, and makes deeper impressions upon you, than if you run it ten times over by your selves. And the reason is, because the same Spirit, which indited the Scriptures, accompanies such solemn Reading of them, and sets it home upon the Hearts and Consciences of them that hear it. So that besides the Majesty and Authority that appears in the Scriptures themselves, as they are the very Word of God, much more than any Exposition of them can be, there is likewise at such a time the Power and Efficacy of the Spirit of Christ then present, to press and enforce it upon the Minds of all such as duly attend to the Reading of them. But now, in the Church of *Rome* all this is lost. For altho' they read the Scriptures indeed, yet they read them as they do their Prayers, in an unknown Tongue, at least to the greatest part of the Congregation, and commonly to the very Reader himself. By which

means the People are depriv'd, not only of the Scriptures themselves, but likewise of the Assistance of God's Spirit, which otherwise would accompany the Reading of them. For as they order the Matter, the Spirit of God himself cannot make his own Word effectual to their Salvation without a Miracle. He must first give them the gift of Tongues, and make them understand a Language they never learn'd, before it is possible for him to make his own Word of any use or advantage to them. For he never works upon our Minds, but in a way suitable to our Natures, as we are rational Creatures, so as first to clear up our Apprehensions of the Good he propounds to us, and so incline our Wills to the Embracement of it. But where the Word of God is propounded in an unknown Tongue, it is impossible for the People to have any Apprehensions of it at all, for the Spirit of God to work upon, and to clear up so as to influence the Will by them. By which means the Word of God it self is made of little or no effect to those who live in the Communion of that Church.

The same Reason holds good also, as to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as Administred by the *Romish Church*. For the whole Office belonging to it, is wrapt
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up in a Language the People do not understand, and therefore know not what the Priest saith, nor whether he Consecrates the Host or no; only they see him perform a great many Ceremonies as unintelligible as the Language he speaks. And at length he puts a Wafer into their Mouths. Now what is there in all this, that the Spirit of God can make use of to the Comfort and Edification of the People? Especially, considering that the Priest intends not to Minister the Spirit of Christ unto them, but only his real Body, as they are bound to believe the Wafer to be. But if it was possible, as it neither is, nor can be, to convert the Bread into the Body of Christ, and give it to the People, what good could that do them, if abstracted from the Spirit? For as our Lord himself saith, *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing*, Joh. 6. But after all this, I do not see how the Promise of the Spirit can belong to the Sacrament, as they manage it. For the Promise is made not to any one part of it as distinct from the other, but to the whole, as it was instituted by Christ. And where the Institution is not rightly observed, neither can the Promise annexed to it, be perform'd. But it is plain, that our Saviour instituted the Cup as well as the Bread. And it is as plain,

plain, that the Church of *Rome* Administers the Bread only, and not the Cup. And therefore they, by depriving the People of one half of the Communion, do thereby deprive them of the Comfort and Benefit of the whole.

And therefore were there no other, as there are many Arguments to deter sober and considering Men from the Communion of that Church, this, one would think, is of it self sufficient to do it ; even because those great means of Grace, the Word and Sacrament it self are so Administred by it, as to be made of no use at all to the People.

And as for Schism, they certainly hazard their Salvation at a strange rate, who separate themselves from such a Church as ours is, wherein the Apostolical Succession, the Root of all Christian Communion, hath been so entirely preserved, and the Word and Sacraments are so effectually Administred ; and all to go into such Assemblies and Meetings as can have no pretence to the great Promise in my Text. For it is manifest, that this Promise was made only to the Apostles and their Successors to the end of the World. Whereas in the private Meetings, where their Teachers have no Apostolical or Episcopal Imposition of Hands, they have no ground
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to pretend to succeed the Apostles, nor by consequence any right to the Spirit which our Lord here promiseth; without which, altho' they Preach their Hearts out, I do not see what Spiritual Advantage can accrue to their Hearers by it. And therefore whatsoever they may think of it, for my own part, I would not be without this Promise of our Saviour for all the World, as knowing, that not only my self, but the whole Catholick Church is highly concern'd in it: It being by virtue of this Promise, that the Church is continually acted, guided, and assisted by the Spirit of God, and so the ordinary means of Grace are made effectual to Salvation, which otherwise would be of no force or efficacy at all. And therefore to speak modestly, they must needs run a very great hazard, that cut themselves off from ours, and by consequence from the Catholick Church, and so render themselves incapable of receiving any benefit from this Promise, or from the means of Grace which they do or may enjoy.

Upon these therefore, and such like considerations, which this Text will readily suggest to your serious and more retired Thoughts. I humbly advise and beseech you all in the Name of Christ your Saviour, and as you do tender your Salvation by him,

him, that you would not hearken unto those, who go about to seduce you from our Church, but that you would continue firm and faithful to it. For so long as you do so, I dare undertake for you, that you are in the ready way to Heaven. But if you once forsake that, whither you will next go, I know not; no, nor you neither.

But when I speak of your continuing firm and faithful to our Church, I do not mean that you should only talk high for her, much less inveigh against her Adversaries, or damn all those, who are not of her Communion; for this is contrary to the Divine and Apostolical Spirit that is in her, which is a Spirit of Meekness, and Soberness, and Charity. But my meaning is, that you firmly believe whatsoever she, from the Word of God propounds as an Article of Faith, and faithfully perform whatsoever she, from the same Word requires as a necessary Duty to God or Man, and by consequence so live in the Communion of our Church, as to live up to the Rules and Constitutions of it.

And oh! that all we, who are here present, and all that profess to be of our Church, wheresoever they are, would for the future do so! What an Holy, what an Happy People should we then be?
How

How Pious towards God, how Loyal to our Sovereign, how Just and Charitable towards all Men? This would be the way to convince our Adversaries of their Errors and Mistakes, when they see how far we excel them in Vertue and good Works. And this would be the way too, to secure our Church against all the attempts that Men or Devils can make upon her. For then our Lord himself would delight to dwell amongst us, and be always present with us, not only by his Spirit, but likewise by his Power too. And if he be with us, we need not fear what Flesh can do against us; so that we may lay it down as a most certain Truth, that our Church can never be destroyed but by it self. For if we do not first fail of performing our Duty unto him, be sure Christ will never fail of performing his Promise unto us. But how Proud, how Malicious soever our Adversaries are, and whatsoever Designs they may carry on against us, he that sitteth in the Heavens will laugh them to scorn, our Lord will have them in derision: He will abate their Pride, assuage their Malice, or else confound their Devices, so as to make them fall themselves into the same Pit that they dig for others. And notwithstanding all their endeavours to the contrary, he will settle
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our Church upon such Foundations, that the Gates of Hell it self shall never be able to prevail against it. Neither will he only continue his Church to us, but likewise his Spirit to our Church, so always to perform this Promise in my Text, *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

Amen. O Blessed Jesu, thou Eternal Son of God; to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be everlasting Honour, Praise and Glory, from this Time forth, and for evermore.

SERMON II.

ACTS i. 26.

And they gave forth their Lots, and the Lot fell upon Matthias. And he was numbred with the Eleven Apostles.

THIS Portion of Scripture appointed for the Epistle this Day, suits as well with the Work that is to be now done, as it doth with the Day for which it is appointed. It is appointed for the Feast of St. *Matthias*, whose Memory we this Day celebrate, of whom we here read, that he was taken into the number of Apostles, in the Church of Christ. And there are several Persons here present, to be ordained now into the sacred Ministry of the same Church, whereof he was ordained an Apostle. And therefore I shall not insist upon the Words themselves

themselves, but I shall take Occasion from hence to discourse of Ordination in general, under which, that of St. *Matthias* in particular will come in of Course.

Now by Ordination in general, I mean, the setting apart some certain Persons to direct, govern, assist, and influence others in the publick Worship of Almighty God, and to administer such Means unto them, as he hath appointed for their eternal Salvation. Concerning which, we shall consider two things, *First*, the Necessity of it, and then the Way and Manner of performing it.

As to the *First*, we need not say much, it being a thing that Mankind in general seems to be agreed in. For as there is no Nation in the World, but where they profess some kind of Religion or other, so there is no Religion professed in the World, but where they have some Persons or other set apart for the Celebration of the several Rites and Ceremonies in it, without which, indeed it is impossible that any Religion should subsist. For if no places were set apart for the Worship of God, Men would soon worship him no where; if no Times, they would never worship him; so if no Persons were set apart for it, none would ever do it at all, at least, not so as they ought.

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And if it be so in Natural, how much more in Revealed Religion, of which this seems to be one of the integral or essential Parts, without which, it is not that Religion which God hath revealed. For whenever he, the great Creator and Governor of the World, hath revealed his Will and Pleasure to his Creatures, how he would have them worship and serve him that made them: He hath still at the same time constituted certain Officers amongst them, to assist them in it; which Officers being, as it were, his own Domesticks, or immediate Servants, or Ministers, waiting continually upon himself and his Service, he always hath reserved to himself the Constitution or Ordination of them; not suffering any one that had a mind to it, to meddle with any thing belonging to the said Offices, without his Leave and Order first obtained. And if any presume to do it, he doth not only make what they do void and of no Effect, but he punisheth them severely for it: as we find by many Instances in holy Scripture.

Hence the Apostle saith, *no Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, Heb. 5. 4.* That is, no Man can be really a Priest, a Minister of God, as *Aaron* was, but such as are called and constituted by God himself, as
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he was. And they that do undertake the said Ministry, without such a Call, whatsoever they may fancy or pretend, they are not God's Ministers, and therefore all they do is in vain, and to no Purpose, as the Apostle saith elsewhere, *How shall they preach, except they be sent, Rom. 10. 15.* They may speak the same Words, deliver the same Truths, press the same Duties, as they do who are really God's Ministers; but this is not Preaching, properly so called; they do not publish and proclaim the Will of God, with any Power or Authority over their Hearers, for they have received none from God, as not being called and sent by him.

This the Apostles and first Disciples of our blessed Saviour, were so sensible of, that when they wanted an Apostle, altho' there were doubtless many excellent Persons among them that might think themselves fit for the Place, yet none of them would undertake it of their own Heads; but they all, with one accord, left it to Almighty God, to determine and declare whom he had chosen and called to it; who having, by his Disposal of the Lots they cast, accordingly acquainted them, that *Matthias* was the Person he pitched upon, he was presently numbred with the Apostles.

But

But all this will appear more clearly under the second Head, which I design principally to consider, and that is, the way and manner whereby God hath been pleased to ordain and set apart Persons for his own Service and Ministry. In speaking to which, I shall not trouble you with any Conjectures how this was done in the Church before *Moses's* time, but shall begin there, where we have a certain Rule to walk by.

In the Day therefore that the Lord smote all the First-Born in the Land of *Aegypt*, he sanctified to himself all the First-Born among the Children of *Israel*, *Numb. 3. 13.* But afterwards, instead of them, he took one whole Tribe, even the Tribe of *Levi*, *ver. 12.* They being about the same number with the First-Born of all *Israel*. For all the Males of the Tribe of *Levi*, from a Month old and upwards, were numbred 22000. and all the First-Born of the Males among the Children of *Israel*, were 22273. So that all the First-Born Males of *Israel*, were only 273. more than the *Levites*, which odd number being redeemed at 5 Sheckles apiece by the Poll, the whole Tribe of *Levi* was from thenceforward set apart to be employed wholly in the Service of God, instead of all the First-Born in *Israel*, *Num. 3. 8.* And out of this Tribe

he chose one Family, even that of *Aaron*, to minister continually to him in the Priests Office, to burn Incense, to slay and offer Sacrifices, to instruct the People in his Law, and the like. And out of this Family he chose *Aaron* himself; and so the First-Born of that Family all along, to be his High-Priest. To whom he appointed not only the Oversight of all the rest, but likewise some certain Offices, which no other Priests or *Levites* could meddle with.

So that we here have three distinct Orders of Men settled and established by God himself to minister unto him, The High-Priest, the Priests, and the *Levites*. Which last, in *Moses's* time, were employed wholly about the Tabernacle and the Vessels belonging to it; but when the Temple was built, they were also made Treasurers, and Judges, and Porters, and Singers, 1 *Chron.* 23. 4.

Now God having thus constituted these several Orders of Men for his own Service, he gave Directions how they should be all consecrated to their several Offices. First, *Aaron* by himself, as the High-Priest, then his Sons as the second or ordinary Priests, *Levit.* 8. And afterwards the *Levites*, *Num.* 8. By which Consecration, not only the Persons then in being, but their Posterity were all ordained into the same Offices

Offices that they themselves were. By *Aaron's* Ordination into the Office of High-Priest, the First-Born or eldest Sons of his Family, were ordained so too. By his Sons Consecration, all their Sons, or the younger Sons of that Family were ordained Priests. And so for the *Levites*, when they were consecrated, all the Males that should ever proceed from them, were consecrated together with them, as being then contained in their Loins. So that although there might be some certain Ceremonies used at their entring upon the Execution of their Office, when they came to Years of Discretion, yet they were not properly ordained or consecrated again; but the Office came to them in Course, or if you will *ex traduce*. The Ordination, which their Ancestors had from God himself, being, by virtue of this Institution and Command, propagated and derived down to them. And thus it continued all along, during the *Mosaic* Dispensation, which was about 2000 Years, even until the Death of our Blessed Saviour; which being typified and fore-shewn by the Sacrifices which these Priests offered, the Priesthood it self must needs continue in Force and Virtue till that was accomplished.

And therefore all the while that Christ lived, he made no Alteration at all in it,

neither did he ever properly abrogate, or repeal the Laws that were formerly made about it, but when he died, they expired together with him. Both the Time and the End for which they were made, being now accomplished. But from that time forward, though the *Jewish* Nation still continued till the Destruction of *Hierusalem*, which was 40 Years after, yet they had not really any Priesthood among them. The Time for which it was ordained, being now expired.

When our Lord therefore was upon Earth, foreseeing that all the *Mosaic* Orders would cease in course upon his death, and knowing that his Church could never subsist without some such Orders of Men set apart for the Administration of his Word and Sacraments; before he died, he took care to lay the Platform of others, suitable to his own Religion. For which Purpose, out of the many Disciples that followed him, he first chose twelve Apostles; to whom he gave Commission to baptize, to preach the Gospel, and to work Miracles for the Confirmation of it, *Matt.* 10. And afterwards he sent out 70 other Disciples, and gave them Power also to preach the Gospel, and cast out Devils in his Name, *Luke* 10. So that he still kept up the same number of Orders in his Church
whilst

whilst himself lived, that was in the *Jewish* Church: For he himself was truly the High-Priest, of whom they under the Law were only Types. Then there were the 12 Apostles; answerable to the Priests of the second Order; and the 70 Disciples, resembling the great number of *Levites*.

But all this while we do not read that the Apostles had any solemn Consecration to their Office, during our Saviour's Life. It is said indeed in *Mark* 3. 14. that he ordained 12. but the Words are ἐποίησεν ἀποστόλους, he made, or appointed 12. to be his Apostles, or Messengers. But we do not find that he ordained them, so as to confer any Sacerdotal Power upon them. He promis'd indeed St. *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles with him, that he would give them the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matt.* 16. But they were as yet in the hands of the *Levitical* Priesthood, and he would not take them from thence to give them to his Apostles, so long as that Priesthood continued in force. But he was no sooner dead and risen again, but he presently performed his Promise. For then the *Levitical* Priesthood being expired; and by Consequence the Keys, which he had before committed to it by his Servant *Moses*, returning on course into his own Hands, he then according to his Promise gave them to his Apostles.

For upon the same Day that he rose again, in the Evening, his Apostles being met together, he came to them, and said to them, *Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained,* John 20. 21, 22, 23. As my Father sent me, even so send I you ; that is, As my Father sent me to preach the Gospel, by anointing me with his Holy Spirit, *Isa. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18.* even so, after the self same manner I send you ; *Receive ye the Holy Ghost,* at the speaking of which Words, he breathed upon them, and so issued forth the Holy Spirit from himself into them. Which, as it is an undeniable Argument of the Spirit's Procession from the Son as well as from the Father ; so it was the highest and truest Consecration of the Apostles that could be, far beyond that of *Aaron* and his Sons. For they were anointed only with material Ointment, which was poured upon *Aaron's* Head, *Levit. 8. 12.* and sprinkled afterwards upon his and his Son's Garments, together with the Blood of the Sacrifice, ver. 30. But this was only a Type of that holy Spirit wherewith the Apostles were anointed by our Lord, when he breathed

breathed it immediately from himself into them.

And now were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, according to the Promise before-mentioned, given to the Apostles. And therefore our Lord, after he had breathed upon them, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, he presently adds, *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Whereby all Sacerdotal Power was now conferred upon the Apostles, even whatsoever is necessary to the Government and Edification of the Church to the World's end. And therefore immediately before his Ascension, the Eleven Apostles being met together again, in the place that he appointed them, our Lord goes to them again, and saith, *All Power is given to me both in Heaven and Earth. Go ye therefore and make all Nations my Disciples, by baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And Lo, I am alway with you to the end of the World.* That is, I, by my holy Spirit which I have breathed into you, am now with you, and so I am always with you, and your Successors to the end of the World.

Now

S E R M O N II.

Now the Apostles being thus solemnly Ordain'd and Consecrated by Christ himself, and having receiv'd so ample a Commission from him ; soon after his Ascension into Heaven, they with some other Disciples, met together, and consulted how to fill up their Number again. For *Judas Iscariot*, who was one of the Twelve, by betraying his Master, had lost both his Office and his Life, and another was now to take his Bishoprick, or Apostleship, according to the Prophecy in the Book of *Psalms*, which *St. Peter* put them in Mind of. And therefore they all agree to have the Number made up again out of these, who had, like the other Apostles, been conversant with our Blessed Saviour, all along from first to last. And they found two considerable Persons among them, who had been so, *Joseph*, surnamed *Justus*, and *Matthias*, both, in their apprehensions, equally qualified for the Place. Yet nevertheless, they would not undertake to chuse either of them. Forasmuch as they themselves, having been chosen by Christ himself, it was not fit to take any into their Number, but whom Christ himself had chosen. And therefore, they resolved to refer it wholly unto him.

But how could that be done, now that Christ was gone from them into Heaven?
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There was no other way but to cast Lots which should be the Person. A way that had been commonly used in such cases. For by the Command of God himself, Lots were cast upon the two Goats, which should be the Lords, and which should be Scape-Goat, *Lev. 16.* The Land of *Canaan* was divided among the twelve Tribes by Lot, *Josh. 18.* *Saul* was chosen King of *Israel* by Lot, *1 Sam. 10.* The several Ministrations and Charges of the Priests, were divided amongst them by Lot, *1 Paral. 24. 25.* There are many such Instances in the *Old Testament*, of referring doubtful Cases to God's decision, by casting Lots upon them: For, as the Wise Man saith, *The Lot is cast into the Lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord, Prov. 16. 33.*

This course therefore the Apostles took, to know which of these two Persons our Lord would have taken into their Number; but before they cast their Lots, they first Address themselves in a more solemn manner to Christ himself, saying, *Thou Lord, which knowest the Hearts of all Men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this Ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own Place; where we may observe, they do not pray that our Lord would chuse one now, but that he would shew*

shew whether of the Two he had chosen already, for so the words run, ἐκ τῶν τῶν δύο ὃν εἶνα ἐξελέξῃ, which one of these Two thou hast chosen, as supposing that he had chosen one of them already, tho' they did not know which. And therefore when they had cast Lots, and the Lot was fallen upon *Matthias*, they took it for granted, as they well might, that he was the Person whom Christ had before chosen to be one of their Number, and therefore without any more ado, he was numbred with the Eleven Apostles, so as to make up the Number of Twelve again.

But here it may be asked, how this *Matthias* should be an Apostle of equal Power with the other, seeing he was not present when the other were Ordain'd by our Saviour, and receiv'd the Spirit from him. So that I answer, that the same doubt may be made concerning St. *Thomas*, for neither was he present when our Lord breathed his Holy Spirit upon his other Apostles, and yet none ever deny'd, but that he was an Apostle of equal Authority with those that were then present. And indeed, the Question concerning both, may be clearly answered by a parallel Case: for we read, *Numb. xi.* how that when *Moses* had, by the appointment of God, chosen Seventy of the Elders of *Israel* to be endow'd with
his

his Spirit, and had order'd them to go to the Tabernacle of the Congregation, *the Lord came down in a Cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the Seventy Elders ; and it came to pass, that when the Spirit rested upon them, they Prophefied, and did not cease. But two of the Seventy remain'd in the Camp, Eldad, and Medad ; and tho' they were not present, the Spirit rested upon them also, and they Prophefied as well as the other.* And this Remark is put upon them, that *they were of them that were written, but went not to the Tabernacle,* Numb. xi. 25, 26. The Case is the self same here : For as *Eldad and Medad*, being chosen by *Moses* into the Number of the Seventy, receiv'd the same Spirit which was given to the other Sixty Eight, altho' they were not present at the Place where the Lord came down in the Cloud to them ; so here, *Thomas and Matthias* being in the Number of the Twelve which we chosen by our Lord to be his Apostles, altho' they were not present at the Place where our Lord gave the Holy Spirit to the other Ten, yet they receiv'd it as effectually to all intents and purposes as the other did. For wheresoever they were, the Holy Ghost breathed upon the Apostles as such, rested upon them also, because they also were chosen

chosen into the Number of Apostles, even *Matthias* himself, as I observ'd before.

This formal Admission of St. *Matthias* into the Number of the Apostles, was upon one of the Ten Days between the Ascension of our Lord to Heaven, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Day of *Pentecost*, Act. 2. And then was fulfilled what our Saviour had Promised his Apostles, saying, *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*, Joh. 14. 16, 18. which therefore is call'd another Comforter, because he was to supply our Saviour's Place and Presence upon Earth; guide his Apostles into all Truth, and direct, assist, and order the Affairs of his Church, until his Coming again. And therefore it was, that now, upon the Day of *Pentecost*, he made, as it were, his publick Entrance into the Church, appearing Visibly to the Disciples, and enabling them to speak all manner of Languages, in order to the Conversion of all Nations to the Faith of Christ.

Now this Holy Spirit of Christ, having thus taken upon him this Office, to shew that he could and would do for the Church whatsoever our Saviour himself, either would or could, was he still present in Person,

son, as well as by this his Spirit: hence as he had chosen Twelve Apostles, his Spirit chuses two others, in as plain and apparent a manner as Christ himself had done it. For there being *certain Prophets and Teachers in the Church at Antioch, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen and Saul; as they Ministred to the Lord and Fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I have called them,* Act. 13. 1, 2. From whence we may observe, that he had before this call'd them to the Work; and now he expressly Commands the Prophets and Teachers there present, to separate, or set them apart for it. He did not employ the Apostles that were Consecrated by our Lord to do it, that their Consecration might appear to be wholly from himself; and so the Church might rest fully satisfied, that altho' our Saviour, the Head of it, be gone to Heaven, yet he hath still, and always will have one upon Earth, that can Exercise his Power so effectually, that he himself may be truly said to be always with it, as he said he would. But howsoever, notwithstanding that he himself had called them, yet he would have them publickly Ordain'd by the Persons beforemention'd, suppos'd to be the Bishops of Syria, to shew that whatsoever Call from him, any should
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afterwards pretend to, yet he would never employ them in his Work and Ministry, until they were publickly Ordain'd, and Separated for it, by the Governours of the Church empower'd by him to do it. And then he would have it done too by the Imposition of Hands, to shew that this was the way that he had appointed for it. For it is said, that *when they had Fasted, and Prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away*, verse 30. or as the word ἀπέλυσαν signifies, they dismissed them, or let them depart: For they were not properly sent by them, but by the Holy Ghost, as it is expressly said in the following words; so then they being sent forth, ἐκπεμφθέντες, were sent forth by the Holy Ghost, and as the Twelve were sent by Christ, so were these two, *Barnabas* and *Saul*, sent by his Holy Spirit, and so were as truly his Apostles as the other. And therefore one of them, even *Saul*, otherwise called *Paul*, is not only called an Apostle of Jesus Christ, but saith expressly, that he was so, *not of Men, nor by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*, Gal. 1. 1. because he was thus sent by the Holy Ghost himself, the same God with the Father and the Son.

From whence we may observe, by the way, upon what good grounds the last Revisers

vifers of the *Common-Prayer*, added two new Holy Days in the Kalendar, which had been omitted in the former Editions, even the Conversion of *St. Paul*, and *St. Barnabas's Day*; for these being Apostles of the same Power and Dignity with the other Twelve, there was all the Reason in the World that we should Commemorate and give God Thanks for them as well as for the other. But to distinguish them from the others, the Eves or Vigils of these Days, are not appointed to be observed so as those of the others are.

Now the Apostles being all thus Ordain'd and Consecrated by Christ's Holy Spirit, they were thereby Invested with full Power and Authority, not only to Preach and Propagate the Gospel, and to add to the Church daily such as should be saved, and to Rule and Govern the said Church at present, but likewise to Institute and Establish such Officers in it, by whom it may be rightly Govern'd according to our Saviour's Mind in all future Ages. In order whereunto, the Twelve first Instituted the Office of Deacons, upon occasion of the *Grecians* murmuring against the *Hebrews*, because their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministration. For, it not being fitting that the Apostles themselves should leave the Word to serve Tables,

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they ordered seven Men of honest Report, to be chosen out for that Work; which seven being set before the Apostles, they Pray'd, and then laid their Hands on them, *Acts 6. 6.* By which Imposition of Hands, they received Power, not only to look after the Widows and Poor, but also to Baptize and Preach the Gospel. For *Stephen* who was one of the Seven, was no sooner Ordain'd, but we presently find him Preaching so powerfully, that the *Jews* were not able to resist the Wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake, *Acts 6. 10.* And *Philip* another of the Seven, Preached Christ so effectually to the *Samaritans*, that they receiv'd the Word gladly, and were Baptized of him, and so was the *Eunuch* too, that was Treasurer to *Candace*, Queen of the *Ethiopians*, *Act. 8.* And this Office of Deacons, thus Instituted by the Apostles, hath continued in the Church ever since, and so must do to the end of the World.

But these Deacons being Ordain'd only to Minister in the Church, the could have no share in the Government of it, which was the main thing that the Apostles were to take care of. And therefore considering that the Spirit, which they had receiv'd, must according to Christ's Promise, abide with his Church for ever, it was necessary they

they should find out some way to Transfer it upon others, and so Successively from one to another, to the Worlds end. Now they found by Experience, what they were doubtless directed to by the Holy Ghost himself, that upon whomsoever they laid their Hands, the Holy Ghost presently fell upon them. Thus when *Philip*, the afore-said Deacon, had Converted and Baptized the *Samaritans*, the Apostles sent *Peter* and *John* to them, who having Pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they receiv'd the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 8. *Philip* did not so much as offer to lay his Hands upon them, and if he had, it would not have done the Work, because he was only a Deacon, and none of the Apostles, who had so receiv'd the Holy Ghost themselves, as to have Power to confer it upon others. As we find *St. Paul* also did, by laying his Hands upon the Disciples at *Ephesus*, *Act*. 19.

Hence it is, that this Power always was, and still is, appropriated only to the Apostles themselves, and their Successors, the Bishops of the Church. And it is that which we now call Confirmation, when a Bishop rightly Ordain'd, after the Example of the Holy Apostles, Prays for these that are Baptiz'd, and lays his Hand upon their Heads, that they may receive the Gifts and Graces of God's Holy Spirit, to

Confirm them in the Faith, and in all Goodness; which duly perform'd, is certainly as effectual now as ever, in those who are rightly dispos'd and qualify'd for it; as, Blessed be God, we find at this very day, to our unspeakable Comfort.

The Apostles therefore, finding by Experience that the Holy Ghost was given by the laying on of Hands, for the Confirmation of Believers; they could not but conclude this to be a proper way also, for the conferring of it upon those who were to succeed them in the Government of the Church. Especially considering, that this was the Way whereby *Josbua*, by the Command of God himself, was constituted the Successor of *Moses*; for *Moses* laid his Hands upon him, by which means the Spirit of Wisdom came upon him, *Numb.* 27. *Deut.* 34. From whence this Rite was commonly used by the *Jewish Church*, in the Constitution of their Governours; and the Holy Ghost himself did not only approve of it, but appointed it to be used in the Ordination of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. Upon these and the like Considerations, the Apostles took this course for the conveying of the Spirit, which they had received, to their Successors in all Ages. For the way whereby Christ bestowed it upon the Twelve, by breathing on them, was pro-

proper and peculiar to himself, from whom the Spirit proceedeth. But this was a way which both they and their Successors in all Ages would be capable of. For their Bodies, as well as Souls, being made the Temples of the Holy Ghost at their Consecration, whensoever they laid their Hands upon any Person, so as to touch his Body, with a design of transferring the same Spirit upon him, it is easie to imagine, how such a Person comes to be endow'd with it. Especially, seeing the Holy Ghost had Instituted and Appointed this to be the way of doing it, and therefore it is impossible it should ever fail. Infomuch, that as the same Power which was given to *Aaron* at his Consecration, was propagated and continued in that Church by successive Generation from Father to Son, so long as the Church it self lasted : So is the same Spirit and Power, which was given to the Apostles at their Consecration, propagated and continued in the Church of Christ, by the successive Imposition of Hands from one to another, and will be, so long as the World endureth.

This therefore being the Method that the Holy Apostles, by the direction of the Spirit it self, had agreed upon before their Dispersions wheresoever any of them went, so soon as they had Converted any considerable

derable Number to the Faith, enough to make a Church, before they departed from them, they still laid their Hands upon one, whom the judg'd the fittest among them, and so left the same Spirit, which they themselves had, with him, for the Government and Edification of that Church. For whosoever was thus Ordain'd, did by that means receive the Spirit. And therefore, *St. Paul* having thus Ordain'd *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, in his second Epistle to him, he useth these words, *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands*, 2 Tim. 1. 6. And what this Gift of God was, he declares in the following words, saying, *For God hath not given us the Spirit of Fear, but of Power, and of Love, and of a sound Mind*. As is he should have said, For that Spirit which God hath given us, even me and thee, is not a Spirit of Fear, but of Power, to instruct and govern the Church; of Love, to regulate our Passions in the doing it; and of a sound Mind, to keep both stedfast in the Faith. Plainly implying, that by the Laying of his Hands upon him, God had given the same Spirit to *Timothy*, that he himself, the the Apostle, had.

But elsewhere, the same Apostle tells *Timothy*, that this Gift was given him by
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Prophecy, *with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. From whence it may seem, that some of the Elders of the Church join'd with St. *Paul*, in laying their Hands upon him; and yet St. *Paul* ascribes it wholly to the laying on of his Hands, and saith, the Gift was given him by that, and only with the other, because he being the only Apostle that laid on his Hands, and so the only Person that had Power by that means to confer the Holy Spirit; altho' it was given to him, together with the laying on of the others Hands upon him, yet it was not given by that, but by the laying on of St. *Paul's* Hands, as he himself saith. As it is in our Church at this time, and so hath been in the *Latin* for many Ages, in the Ordination of a Priest; the Priests there present, join with the Bishop in their laying their Hands upon him, and yet he is Ordain'd only by the Bishop's laying on his Hands. For how many Priests soever lay their Hands upon another's Head, they can never make him a real Priest, unless there be a Bishop with them; but a Bishop, by the Imposition of his Hands, can make a Priest, altho' there be never another Priest with him. Neither doth the Law require, that any Priests should be present at such Ordination, but only that the Bishop, with the Priests pre-

sent, (if there happen to be any) shall lay their Hands upon him that is to be Ordain'd, the Imposition of the Priests Hands, being only to signifie their Consent, that such a Person should be receiv'd into their Order, and so take off the blame from the Bishop, in case he should prove to have been unworthy of it. But still, it is only by the Imposition of the Bishop's Hands that he is made a Priest, as *St. Paul* saith, that *Timothy* receiv'd the Spirit, by the laying on of his Hands, notwithstanding that the *Presbytery* join'd with him in it.

But of this, the Spirit's being given by such Imposition of Hands, so that it is by him Principally that the Person is Ordain'd, we have a very remarkable instance in the *Acts* of the Apostles, *Chap. 20.* where we read how *St. Paul* having Ordain'd many Elders or Bishops in *Asia*, he summon'd them to a Visitation that he held at *Miletus*, and in the Charge he gave them, among other Things, he said, *Take heed therefore to your selves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, or Bishops, ver. 28.* For from hence it appears, that when they were Ordain'd by the Imposition of the Apostles Hands, the Holy Ghost so came upon them, that he Constituted them in the Office they were Or-

Ordain'd to: It was he that made them Bishops; the Apostle, and whosoever else might join with him in laying on of Hands, were only his Instruments, the Holy Ghost was the principal Agent. And so questionless he is, and always will be, in all such Ordinations. So that all who are regularly Ordain'd, may be truly and properly said to receive their Power and Commission from the Holy Ghost, that is then conferr'd upon them, and so from Christ himself.

Having thus considered the Course that the Apostles, by Christ's Direction, took and instituted in the Church, for the conferring of Holy Orders, so as that they might transfer the same Spirit which they themselves receiv'd, upon those who were admitted unto them, and so continue it in the Church for ever: We may further observe, that besides that of Deacons before-mention'd, they found it necessary to Establish two other Orders in the Church, to remain through all Ages: first their own, which we now call the Order of Bishops, who are therefore by the Ancients commonly term'd the Apostles Successors, because that by a successive Imposition of Hands, continued all along from the Apostles themselves, they receive the same Spirit and Power which the Apostles had, not only
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for the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, but likewise for the Government of the Church, and for the conferring of the Holy Spirit by the Imposition of their Hands, as the Apostles did, both for the Confirmation of Believers, and likewise for the Ordination of Persons into their own and other Offices in the Church.

The other Order, is that of Priest-hood, which being Instituted for the due Administration of all the ordinary means of Grace, it was necessary, that they who were admitted into this Order also, should have the Holy Ghost, the Fountain of all Grace conferred upon them, to influence their several Administrations, without which it is impossible they should ever attain their end. And hence it is, that according to the Practice of the Catholick and Apostolick Church, tho' not in that of Deacons, yet in the Ordination of Priests, as you will see presently, the Bishop when he lays his Hand severally upon every one that receives that Order, he saith, *Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands; whose Sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained.* Where we may observe, that altho' some other words are inserted to determine

termine and distinguish the Office committed to them, yet all the same words are repeated, which our Lord himself used at the Ordination of his Apostles; which the Catholick Church always judg'd necessary, not only in Imitation of our Blessed Saviour, but likewise, because that the Persons who are Ordain'd Priests in his Church, are to Preach the same Word, Administer the same Sacraments, and Exercise the same Power in the Censures of the Church as the Apostles themselves did. And therefore it is necessary that they should be endu'd with the same Spirit, Ordain'd after the same manner, and entrusted with the same Power of the Keys, as the Apostles themselves were. By which Means, the Means of Grace and Salvation Administred by Priests thus Ordain'd, become as effectual to those that use them aright, as when they were Administred by the Apostles themselves. The Spirit, which they recieve by this Imposition of Hands, being always ready to assist at their severall Administrations, and to Bless and Sanctifie them to those who are duly prepared and disposed for them.

Now from what we have thus briefly, as the Occasion would permit, discours'd upon this Subject; I shall draw only two inferences; whereof the first concerns those
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who are now to be admitted into Holy Orders, either Priests or Deacons. For from what ye have now heard, ye may easily see the Duty as well as Dignity of the Office you are call'd to, to be Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the manifold Mysteries of God. And therefore I hope you have prepar'd your selves, according to the directions that have been given you, by Prayer and Fasting, for so great an Undertaking ; and so are both duly dispos'd to receive the Power and Spirit that shall be committed to you, and also fully resolved by the Grace of God, to exercise and improve it for your Master's use. For which Purpose, as I do not doubt, but you have seriously consider'd what Questions will be Propounded to you, and what Answers ye must give to them ; so I must entreat you to keep it always in your Minds, how solemnly you this Day devoted your selves to the Service of God and his Church, and what Vows and Promises you made in his Presence, to be diligent in Praying, in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in framing your Lives accordingly, in Ministering the Doctrine, the Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord Commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same ; to drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines, and to Maintain
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and set forward, as much as in you lies ; Quietness, Love and Peace, among Christian People, and reverently to obey your Ordinary, and those to whom is committed the Charge and Government over you. If ye do these things according as ye then Promise, ye will save both your selves and them that hear you ; but otherwise, after all your Preaching unto others, you your selves will be Cast-aways.

The other Inference respects all here present. For from the Premises duly weighed, you cannot but all infer, both the Necessity and Dignity of those Holy Orders which are now to be conferred. The Necessity, in that the means of Salvation cannot be Administred effectually without them ; and the Dignity, in that they are effectually Administred by them. Upon which account, you cannot but acknowledge, there is a real Honour and Respect due to those who are thus Ordain'd, though not for their own, yet for their Office sake, and for his sake, whose Officers and Ministers they are, in conveying the greatest Blessings to you, that you are, or ever can be capable of.

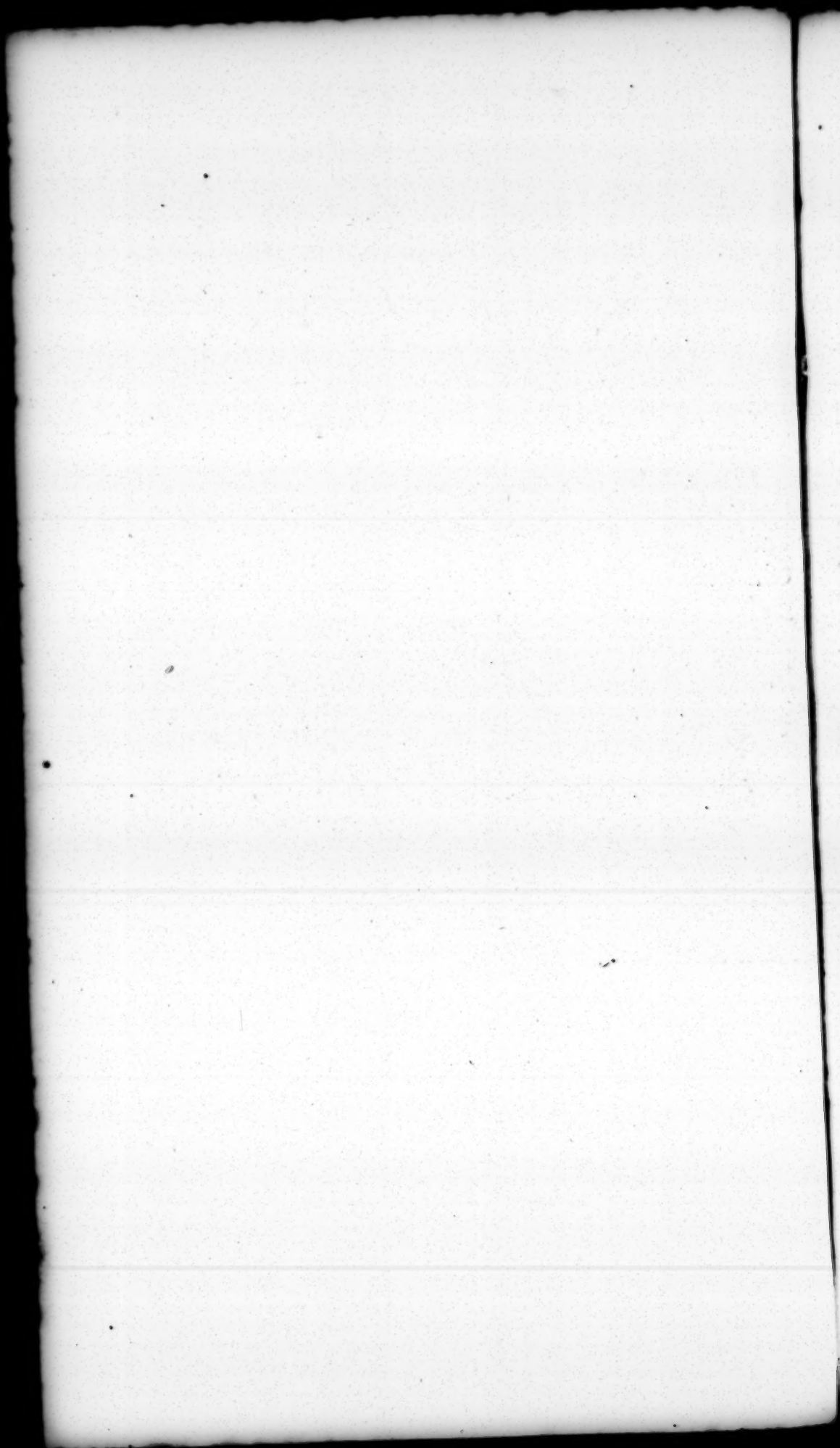
Wherefore, as *St. Paul* said to *Timothy*, *Let no Man despise thy Youth*, 1 Tim. 4. 12. So say I to you, Do not despise Christ's Clergy for their Youth, or Poverty, or up-
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on any other account whatsoever. But esteem them as ye ought for his sake whose Clergy they are. And thank God that you have such a Clergy among you, as is Ordain'd according to Christ's own Institution, and endu'd with the same Spirit which he breathed into his Holy Apostles, handed down from them to us, by a continued and uninterrupted Succession. Which is the great Glory of our Church, and that which you can never sufficiently thank God for. As considering, that by this means you have the Word and Sacraments so truly and powerfully Administred among you, that nothing but the extream Neglect of your selves, can hinder any of you from being Happy for ever.

But that you may all be so, you must not think it enough, that you have such a Clergy Ordain'd among you, nor that the Means of Grace are so duly and regularly Administred to you, but you must Exercise your selves continually in them, otherwise your having of them will signifie nothing, unless it be to sink you lower into the the Abyss of Misery. Neither must you use only some, but all the Means that are appointed for the begetting or increasing of true Grace and Vertue in you. For if you neglect any, you had even as good neglect all. One being as necessary
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in its kind as another, and all assisting one another, in order to the Attainment of the End. And after all, tho' you use the Means, and all the Means, you must use them only as Means; and therefore, not rest in them, nor trust on them, but only upon him, who hath appointed them, and hath sent his Holy Spirit to move in them, to make them effectual to the Purposes for which they are used.

Do but this, and you will soon find, by your own Experience, what infinite cause you have to Bless God for your living in a Church where Holy Orders are conferred, and by consequence the means of Salvation Administred so exactly, according to the Institution and Appointment of Christ our Saviour; To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*



SERMON III.

2 COR. iv. 1.

*Therefore seeing we have this Ministry,
as we have received Mercy, we faint
not.*

THE last publick Ordination that was held here, happening upon St. *Matthias's* Day, from his formal and solemn Admission into the number of the Apostles, I took Occasion to discourse in general of the publick Admission of Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of Christ's Church, which we now call Ordination; shewing both the Necessity of it, and likewise the antient way and manner of performing it. Now this falling out upon St. *Matthias's* Day, who was both an Apostle and Evangelist, I have chosen this part of the Epistle ap-
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pointed for the Day, from whence to treat briefly of our Admission into the Ministry of the Gospel here spoken of, as it is now celebrated in our Church, according to the antient Way and Manner before-mentioned.

But before we come to that, we must observe, that the Apostle having, in the foregoing Chapter, fully declared and proved the Excellency of the Evangelical Ministry beyond that of the Legal. He thence infers, that he and others, with whom this glorious Ministry was entrusted, having received so great a Mercy, did not faint, or grow weary in the Execution of it, nor were ever discouraged by any Straights or Difficulties they met with in it, as being fully persuaded, that their faithful Performance of their Duty in it, was a Matter of that extraordinary Consequence, both to themselves and others, that all the Troubles that could ever befall them for it, should never in the least dishearten them; but they were resolved, whatsoever came of it, faithfully to discharge the Trust that was reposed in them. *Therefore seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy we faint not.*

And this certainly is left upon Record, as a standing Rule for the Ministers of the Gospel to walk by in all Ages and places
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of the World ; especially those of our Church, who have the same Ministry or Authority to administer the Word and Sacraments conferred upon them, which the Apostle here speaks of, by being ordain'd regularly, according to the way and manner which the Apostles themselves, by the Direction of Christ and his holy Spirit, instituted in his Church, and with all the Care and Diligence, with all the Decency and Order, with all the Piety and Devotion that can be used or exercised upon any Occasion whatsoever.

But this being that which I principally intend to insist upon at this time ; without any further Preface or Apology, I shall, by the Assistance of God, run through the whole Office of our Church for the Ordination of Deacons and Priests, and shew the Excellency of the Course and Method she takes for the admitting any of her Members into the Ministry of the Gospel ; that so they who are to be ordained, may understand what great Obligations lie upon them, not to be either Idle, or Faint-hearted, but Diligent and Courageous in the Discharge of the Office committed to them ; and all others may see what Cause they have to bless God, that they live in a Church, wherein the Apostolical Institution is so strictly observed, and so much Care taken

in the chusing and ordaining those who are to have the Charge of their Souls,

First, therefore that all the pious and devout Members of the Church dispersed over the whole Kingdom, may know the Times when it is to be done, and so improve the Interest they have in Heaven, for God's Blessing and Assistance in the Management of so great a Work. There are four set Days in every Year, all *Sunday's*, appointed for it, and in the respective *Weeks* immediately foregoing, called *Ember Weeks*, three Days are set apart to be spent in Fasting and Prayer to God, that he would so guide and govern the Minds of his Servants, the Bishops, and Pastors of his Church, that they may lay Hands suddenly on no Man, but Faithfully and Wisely make choice of fit Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of his Church; and also that he would give his Grace and Heavenly Benediction to all that shall be then ordained to any holy Function, that both by their Life and Doctrine, they may set forth his Glory, and set forward the Salvation of all Men.

Now whilst all good People are thus jointly imploring God's Aid and Direction of them in it, the Bishops, in their several Dioceses, are considering whom to chuse; and examining the Fitness of those who
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offer themselves to be admitted to any holy Function, either of Deacon or Priest, according to these general Rules which the Church for that purpose has laid down before them. As *First*, That none shall be admitted Deacon, except he be 23 Years of Age, unless he have a Faculty: And every Man that is to be admitted Priest, shall be full 24 Years old. That none be ordained, either Deacon or Priest, who hath not first some certain Place where he may exercise his Function, *Can.* 33. nor except he subscribe to the three Articles mentioned in *Can.* 36. that is, *First*, to the King's Supremacy, in all Causes and over all Persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal. *Secondly*, to the Book of Common-Prayer, and ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: that it contains nothing contrary to the Word of God; that it may be lawfully used, and that he himself will use that and none other. *Thirdly*, to the 39 Articles, acknowledging them to be all agreeable to the Word of God.

And besides all this, none must be admitted to holy Orders, except he can give an Account of his Faith in Latin, according to the said 39 Articles, and he be able to confirm the same, by sufficient Testimonies out of the Holy Scriptures. And moreover, except he then exhibit Letters

Testimonial of his good Life and Conversation, under the Seal of some College in *Cambridge* or *Oxford*, where he remained before, or else of three or four grave Ministers, together with the Subscription and Testimony of other credible Persons, who have kuown his Life and Behaviour by the space of three Years next before.

According to these Rules every Bishop in his Diocese, either by himself, or some Minister deputed by him, is obliged to examine those who come to be admitted into the Ministry of the Church; and if, upon due Examination and Enquiry, he find that they are of the Age required, have a real Title, subscribe to the 39 Articles, and can give a good Account of their Faith, and good Proof of their sober and pious Life; then he makes choice of them, otherwise he rejects them and lays them aside as unfit for the Ministry.

When any are thus approved of, and chosen by the Bishop to be admitted into holy Orders, he appoints them to meet him at the Cathedral, or some Parish Church in his Diocese, where after Divine Service, and a Sermon fitted to the Occasion, the Archdeacon or his Deputy presents first those who are to be admitted Deacons to him, as he sits near to the Communion Table, in the Presence of the whole

whole Congregation then present. Upon which the Bishop adviseth him to take heed that they whom he presents, be apt and meet, for their Learning and godly Conversation, to exercise their Ministry duly, to the Honour of God, and the edifying of the Church. To which the Archdeacon answers, That he has enquired of them, as to their Lives, and examin'd them as to their Learning, and thinks them to be so, even apt and meet for the Ministry they undertake. After which, that the whole Congregation may be satisfied as well as the Bishop, of their Fitness for the Office ; he requires, that if any of them know any Impediment or notable Crime in any of the Persons to be ordained, for which he ought not to be received into the Ministry, they would now come forth and shew what that Crime is. So that if any of you know any such Crime or Impediment in any of the Persons to be now ordained, it is your Fault if they be ordained, for you may hinder it if you will ; nay, ye are bound to do it, by discovering what Objections ye have against it.

From whence yemay observe by the way, that whatsoever disorderly or unworthy Persons are admitted to holy Orders, ye must not blame the Bishop, but yourselves, or those that know them for it.

For it cannot be supposed, that he should have the Personal Knowledge of every one that comes to him for Orders; all that he can do, is to enquire of them, and consider what Credit is to be given to the Letters Testimonial which they bring to him, wherein it may be possible for him to be imposed upon. But they who do not only personally know them, but know them to be of so wicked and loose a Conversation, that they ought not to be received into the Ministry, and yet do not acquaint the Bishop with it, either before, or when he requires them to do it in the Face of the Congregation, they ought to bear all the Blame now, and must answer for it another Day.

After this, if no Crime be objected, the Bishop, commending those that are to be ordained, to the Prayers of the Congregation, he reads the *Litany* with a Clause inserted in it, proper for the Occasion, and so hath not only the joint Consent of the whole Congregation, that they should be ordained, but also their joint Prayers and Supplications to God for them. And then proceeding to the Communion-Service, after the Epistle, he administers the Oath of Supremacy to them: Wherein they solemnly swear, that they utterly testify and declare, that the King is
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the only supream Governour of this Realm. And that no Foreign Prince or Prelate, and therefore no Bishop or Pope of *Rome*, hath, or ought to have any Authority, or Jurisdiction here. And that they utterly renounce all such Foreign Powers, and promise from henceforth, that they will bear Faith and true Allegiance to the King's or Queen's Highness, their Heirs, and lawful Successors, &c.

From which Oath, as imposed on all that are ordained, there are several things worthy to be observed. As *First*, how careful our Church is, that no Papist should be admitted into her Ministry; for he that takes this Oath doth *ipso facto* renounce Popery, for he renounceth the Pope himself, and all that Supremacy and Authority, he pretends to in this Kingdom. And then how ridiculous and absurd must it needs be for any to imagine that the Clergy of *England* should favour Popery, when they cannot be made Clergy-men without renouncing it. Hence also we may observe how strictly all that take this Oath are obliged to bear Faith and true Allegiance to the King or Queen and their Heirs and Successors, as strict as any Oath can bind them. And therefore while they who were ordained, and so took this Oath, and afterwards turned Traytors and Rebels, what

what, I say, they will answer for themselves, I dread to think of : But let them look to that. As for you, who are to take this Oath now, I advise you to remember it as long as ye live ; and be as faithful in the keeping, as I hope ye are sincere in the taking of it.

The Oath being thus Administred to every one that is to be Ordain'd, the Bishop Propounds several Questions to them ; to which, every one is bound to Answer for himself, according to what is prescrib'd ; and all this is done publickly, in the Presence of the People, that they also may be Witnesses of it.

The first Question is,

Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying of his People ?

A great Question indeed, and that which no Man can give a true and positive Answer to, without having searched very narrowly into his own Heart, and seriously considered the bent and inclinations of his Soul. But it is a Question very necessary to be Propounded : For, the Holy Ghost now supplies the Place and Room of our Blessed Saviour, in his Church Militant here on Earth. And therefore, as it was by him, that the several Offices themselves were at
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first Constituted, so it is by him, that Men are call'd to the Execution of them; and it is by him alone, that all Ecclesiastical Ministrations, perform'd by such Officers, are made effectual to the Purposes for which they are appointed. And therefore the Church is bound to take Care, that none be admitted into her Ministry, but such as she believes and hopes to be call'd to it by the Holy Ghost. But she can have no Ground to believe this, but only from the Testimony of the Persons themselves, none but themselves being acquainted with the Motions of God's Spirit upon their own Hearts. And therefore the Bishop requires them to deal plainly and faithfully with him and the Church, and to tell him, whether they really trust, that they are moved by the Holy Ghost to take this Office upon them? To which every one is bound to Answer, *I trust so*; not that he knows it, or is certain of it, for it is possible that his Heart may deceive him it, but that he trusts or hopes it is so.

But what ground can any one have to trust, that he is moved by the Holy Ghost to take the Ministry upon him? To that, I answer, in short, that if a Man finds, that upon due Examination, the Bishop of the Diocese where he is to serve, is satisfied of his Abilities and Qualifications for the Ministry,

nistry ; and that his great End and Design in undertaking it, is to serve God, for the promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying of his People ; he hath good Grounds to trust, that he is moved to it by the Holy Ghost, it being only by him, that any Man can be duly Qualified for it, and moved to take it upon him, out of so good and pious a Design as that is. But if either of these things be wanting ; as if a Man be not fitted for the Office, he may conclude, he is not call'd to it by the Holy Ghost, for he neither calls, nor useth any but fit Instruments in what he doth ; or if a Man be moved to it, out of a Design, not to do good, but to get Applause or Preferment in the World, he may thence infer, that he is not moved by the Spirit of God, but by the Spirit of Pride and Covetousness to it ; and then can have no ground to expect, that the Holy Ghost should ever bless and assist him in the Execution of his Office. According to these Rules therefore, they, who are to be now Ordain'd, may discern, whether they can truly give the Answer requir'd to this great Question that will be Propounded to them. As for their Qualifications for it, the Bishop hath already approved of them ; but as to their main End and Design, in undertaking the Ministry, that must be
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left to God and their own Consciences, who alone know it, and so can best judge, whether they can truly say, that they trust they are moved to it by the Holy Ghost.

The next Question Propounded is,

Do you think that you are truly call'd according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the due Order of this Realm, to the Ministry of the Church?

Which Question seems to be Propounded, that the Church may know, whether they be fully satisfied in their own Minds of the Legality of the Orders that they are to receive in our Church, and so to prevent both *Papists* and *Schismatics* from receiving of them. For none that are really such, can truly say, as every one who is Ordain'd, is bound to answer; *I think so.*

In the next place, the Bishop asketh them, whether they unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament*? For unless they do so, they are not fit to be Ministers of the Word and Sacraments contain'd and prescrib'd in them. And therefore every one answers, *I do believe them.*

Hitherto, the Questions have been only concerning their present Opinion and Faith. But they which follow, concern their future Behaviour, and Diligence, and Faithfulness in discharging the Office committed

to them ; and therefore their Answers are all so many solemn Promises made to God and his Church, to act accordingly. Obliging themselves in the Presence of God, that they will diligently Read the Holy Scriptures, and gladly execute the whole Office of a Deacon, there declared to them ; that they will apply all their Diligence to frame and fashion their own Lives, and the Lives of their Families, according to the Doctrine of Christ, and reverently obey their Ordinary. For being asked by the Bishop, whether they will do these things or no, every one answers, *I will, or I will do so by the Help of God ; or I will endeavour my self, the Lord being my Helper.* Which Promises being so solemnly made before God and his Church, are certainly as binding, as if they were made upon Oath, and ought to be as Religiously observ'd. Insomuch, that as all Christians, as such, should always remember, and keep the Vows and Promises they made, when they were Baptized ; so all Ministers, as such, should always remember, and keep those Vows and Promises which they made when they were Ordained. For which Purposes, it is very convenient, if not necessary, for us often to read over the Office of Ordination, or at least that part of it which contains the Answers and

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Promises which we made to God and his Church, when we were receiv'd into the Ministry of the Gospel.

Now, every one having thus obliged himself, faithfully to discharge the Office that shall be Conferred upon him, and to Behave himself according to the Precepts of the Gospel, through the whole Course of his Life: The Bishop then lays his Hands severally, upon the Head of every one that is to be Ordain'd Deacon; and saith, *Take thou Authority to Execute the Office of a Deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* He lays his Hands upon them, as the Apostles did upon those whom they Ordain'd Deacons, *Acts 6. 6.* And so he gives them Authority to Execute the Office of a Deacon, not in his own Name, but in the Name of the most Blessed Trinity, whose Ministers they are now made. And therefore the Bishop delivers to every one of them the *New Testament*, saying, *Take thou Authority to Read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to Preach the same, if thou be thereto Licensed by the Bishop himself.*

By which means, they who are thus Ordain'd are now enabled to Read the Gospel with Authority, as the Ministers of Christ, whose Gospel it is. But they are not to
Preach,

Preach, except they are Licensed to do it by the Bishop himself. For the Supream Care of all the Souls in his Diocese, being committed unto him; it is not fitting that any should undertake to Expound the Mysteries of the Gospel there, without his Leave and Approbation.

All that are Ordain'd Deacons, having now Authority to Read the Gospel, the Bishop accordingly appoints one of them to Read the Gospel on the Occasion, as a Sign and Earneſt of that Authority which is now committed to them. And then if there be no Priests to be Ordain'd, he proceeds in the Communion.

But if there be any to be Ordain'd Priests at the same time, they being before Presented to the Bishop, to be admitted to the Order of Priesthood, after the same manner as the Deacons were, and with the same Cautions, both to him that Presents them, and to the People that are present; the Bishop Administers to them also the Oath of Supremacy, before spoken of, and then Reads to them a very Grave and Pious Discourse, of the great Dignity and Importance of the Office whereunto they are call'd; exhorting them, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be Studious, Diligent and Faithful in the Execution of it. And that the Congregation

tion of Christ there Assembled, may also understand their Minds and Wills in those things, and that their Promise may the more move them to do their Duty, he demands them to Answer plainly to such Questions which he, in the Name of God and his Church, shall propound to them.

Where we may observe, that the first Question put to those, who were Ordain'd Priests, concerning their being mov'd by the Holy Ghost, to take that Office upon them, is now omitted; for these having been Ordain'd Deacons before, it is suppos'd, that they were then mov'd by the Spirit of Christ to take the Ministry of his Gospel upon them, and there is no need of any further Call from him. For being once call'd by him, though it was but to the lowest Office of his own Institution, the Church takes it for granted, that it is his Pleasure they should be promoted to any higher Office, if there be sufficient Reason and Occasion for it.

But the first Question here, is the same with the second in the Ordination of Deacons, concerning the Legality of our Orders; and the next is, whether they be perswaded, that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to Salvation, and are determin'd to Instruct the People out of the said Scriptures, and to Teach

nothing as requir'd of Necessity to Salvation, but what they shall be perswaded, may be concluded and prov'd by the same. To which every one Answers, *I am so perswaded, and have so Determin'd by God's Grace.* Which shews how Necessary it is, that they who come to be Ordain'd should consider these things before-hand; for otherwise, how can they say, they have so determin'd already?

The other Questions and Answers are so fram'd, that they, who are to by Ordain'd Priests, do thereby Promise, and Oblige themselves, in the Name, and by the Help of God, that they will give faithful Diligence, always to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath Commanded: And as this Church and Realm hath received the same; that they will be ready with all Diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word: That they will be diligent in Prayers, and in Reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such Studies that will help to the Knowledge of the same. That they will be diligent to frame and fashion themselves, and their Families, according to the Doctrine of Christ: That they will maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in them, Quietness, Peace,
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and Love, amongst all Christian People ; and that they will reverently Obey their Ordinary and other chief Ministers, unto whom is committed the Charge and Government over them. For being ask'd, whether they will do these things or no ; every one answers for himself, *I will do so, by the Help of God, or the Lord being my Helper.* Which shews the extraordinary care our Church takes, that all her Clergy may not only be Orthodox, and Virtuous, and good Men, but faithful also in the Discharge of their Duty ; in that, she admits none to Holy Orders, without laying upon them the highest Obligations imaginable, to be so. And they who, after all this, prove otherwise, will certainly have a very dismal account to give, when our Lord shall hold his general Visitation at the last Day.

After this, the Bishop having Pray'd, that God, who had given them a Will to do all these things, would give them also Strength and Power to perform the same : He then desires the Congregation, secretly in their Prayers, to make their humble Supplication to God for all those things. For which secret Prayers, Silence is order'd to be kept for a Space.

There is something like to this in the *Greek Church*, where the Bishop, at the Or-

daining of a Priest, Prays once *μυσικῶς*, secretly by himself. But here, every one in the Congregation is desired to do it, that upon so solemn an Occasion as this, all sorts of Prayer may be used, even Secret, as well as Publick, and that every one by himself, as well as altogether, may lift up their Hearts to God, and humbly supplicate his Divine Majesty for all these things; that is, that he would give those, who are now to be Ordain'd, Grace to do all these things which they have now Promised.

Wherefore, when ye hear the Bishop desire you to Pray secretly, as ye would shew your Dutifulness and Obedience, not only to him, but to Christ too, in whose Name he speaks; Ye must fall down immediately upon your Knees, and in the most Humble and Earnest manner that ye can; beseech Almighty God, the Fountain of all Wisdom, Grace, and Goodness, that he would be pleased, for Christ Jesus sake, to assist those, who are now to be Ordain'd, with such Influences of his Holy Spirit, whereby they may be enabled always to Perform what they have now Promis'd; and so both save themselves and those that hear them. If ye do this Heartily and Sincerely, as ye ought, it will doubtless be of very great advantage, not only to them, but to your selves too. For your Prayers will

will one time or other, return into your own Bosom, and procure as great a Blessing for you, as you desire for them.

Now, the whole Congregation having spent some time on their Knees in Secret Prayer to God for his Holy Spirit, they all rise up again, and humbly confiding, that God, according to his Promise, hath heard their Prayers; they join their Forces as it were together, and with one Heart and Voice, call for the said Blessed Spirit to come down upon them, saying, or singing that Apostolical Hymn,

*Come Holy Ghost, our Souls inspire,
And lighten with Celestial Fire, &c.*

Which done, the Bishop, with all there present, Prays again, and Praises and Worships the most high God, for these his Inestimable Benefits to Mankind, in sending his Son to be our Saviour; in appointing several Offices in the Church, to Administer the Means of Salvation to us, and in calling the Persons now present to the same.

And when this Prayer is ended, the Bishop, with the Priests present, lay their Hands severally upon the Head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood, the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their Knees, and the Bishop saying,

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Receive the Holy Ghost, for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands; whose Sins thou dost Forgive, thy are Forgiven; and whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his Holy Sacraments, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Where there are several things worthy to be observed.

As first, that altho' the whole Power of Ordination be in the Bishop alone, and the Imposition of his Hands for that Purpose is sufficient to the making of a Priest, yet the Church hath thought good to Order, that the Priests which are present, shall lay on their Hands too, in Conformity, I suppose, to the Ancient Custom that hath obtain'd in the *Latin* Church. I say the *Latin*, because it was never heard of in the *Greek*, or any of the *Eastern* Churches, that any but Bishops should lay Hands upon Persons to be Ordain'd. But in the *Latin*, there is an Ancient Canon for it, or Decree of a Council, held at *Carthage*, Anno Dom. 398. which saith, *Presbyter cum ordinatur, Episcopo eum benedicente, & manum super Caput ejus tenente, etiam omnes Presbyteri qui presentes sunt,*

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manus suas juxta, manus Episcopi super caput illius teneant; when a Priest is Ordain'd, the Bishop Blessing him, and laying the Hand upon his Head, let all the Priests also that are present, hold their Hands upon his Head, by the Hands of the Bishop. And from hence, I suppose it was, that our *Rubrick* was taken; in that it agrees so exactly with it in every particular. And the Reason of it seems to be the same with that of the fourth Canon of the Council of *Nice*; that three Bishops shall be always present at the Ordination of a Bishop. Not but that the Ordination is valid, and was always reputed so, altho' perform'd only by one Bishop, but to prevent clandestine Ordinations, to make the Work more publick and solemn, and to signalize it by the concurrent Testimony and Consent of several Persons joining together in it.

For in the next place we must observe, that altho' the Priests, if any be present, lay on their Hands also, yet it is expressly Order'd, that the Bishop shall say the words, *Receive the Holy Ghost*, &c. For if a meer Priest should say them, or any one but a Bishop, the Ordination was always reckon'd null and void. For this was a judg'd Case in the second Council of *Sevil*, *Anno Dom. 619.* which, under-

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standing that a Bishop at the Ordination of one Priest and two Deacons, laid his Hands upon them; but being troubled with Sore Eyes, so that he could not Read, a Priest Blessed them, or read the Words of Consecration; they judged the whole Action to be void, and that the Persons who should have been Ordain'd, did not receive *consecrationis titulum, sed ignominie potius elogium*; not the Title of Consecration, but rather a Monument of Ignominy; and therefore were not to be reputed among the Clergy. So careful was the Church in those Days, that every thing essential to Ordination, should be perform'd by the Bishop himself. And so is our Church at this time, and therefore requires that the Bishop say the Words.

And then concerning the Words themselves, I observ'd the last time, the Reason why they are the same wherewith our Lord Ordain'd his Apostles, only there are some others inserted to determine, and others added to Explain the Office that is now Conferred. And therefore I shall observe no more about them now, but that the Bishop pronounceth them, and so Confers the Order, not in his own Name, but *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, whose Vicegerent he is, in Ordaining Persons to Minister to
his

his Divine Majesty in this Sacred Office of Priesthood.

The Priests being now Ordain'd, the Bishop delivers to every one of them kneeling, the *Bible* in his Hand, not only the *New Testament*, as it was in the Ordination of Deacons, but both *Old* and *New*, or the whole *Bible*, and when he delivers it, he saith,

Take thou Authority to Preach the Word of God, and to Minister the Holy Sacraments, in the Congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.

So that now they have Authority, not only to Read the Gospel, but to Preach the whole Word of God, and to Minister his Holy Sacraments, with Power and Efficacy, the Holy Spirit which they have now receiv'd, being always ready at the Execution of the several parts of their Office, to make them effectual to the great Ends and Purposes for which they are appointed. But altho' they are by this means made Priests of the *Catholick Church*, and so may effectually Administer the Word and Sacraments in any part of the World; yet nevertheless, they are not to do it any where, but in the Congregation where they shall be lawfully Appointed, *i. e.* by the Bishop of the Place, who alone can lawfully do it.

When

When this is done, the *Nicene Creed* is sung, or said, and then the Bishop goes on in the Service of the Communion: Which all they that have receiv'd Orders, are requir'd to take together, and to remain in the same place where Hands were laid upon them, until such time as they have receiv'd the Communion, that so they may be still more strictly oblig'd, upon the very Sacrament it self, faithfully to perform what they have now Promised, and may receive further supplies of Grace and assistance from our Blessed Saviour to do it, by partaking of his most precious Body and Blood.

Thus I have laid before you, the Method and Design of the Offices which our Church hath Appointed for the Ordination of Priests and Deacons; that soye may understand the Excellency of them, and be the better prepar'd, not to be Idle Spectators, much less Disturbers of so great a Work; but Devoutly, and Heartily to join in the Prayers that are made for those who are Ordain'd. Now from all that hath been said upon this Subject; I shall speak a few, and but a few words, 1. To those who come to receive Holy Orders, and then to all those who are present at it.

As for you, who are come hither, to
take

take upon you the Office, either of Deacon, or Priest, in the Church of Christ; ye have heard, and I hope consider'd before now, the Greatness of the Office ye undertake, and the Promise ye must make before ye are admitted into it. Let me now beseech you in the Name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, whose Servant ye are now to be, that from this Day forward, ye look upon him as your great Master; and lay out your selves wholly in the Service he calls you to. And whatsoever Difficulties ye meet with in it, follow the Apostles Example, *faint not*, nor be discouraged, but go on with Cheerfulness and Alacrity, as remembering ye serve the best Master in the World; one, who will not only stand by, and assist you, but reward you at last with a Crown of Righteousness.

As for the rest, I shall only say, that from what ye have heard, ye may easily see what cause ye have to thank God, that they who administer the Means of Grace and Salvation to you, are so Regularly, so Solemnly, so Apostolically Ordained. And how great an Esteem and Reverence ye ought to have for all, who are thus Ordained, though not for their own sakes, yet for his sake whose Ministers they are, and whose Work they do, even our dear
and

and ever Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ:
To whom, with the Father, and the Holy
Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and
for ever. *Amen.*

S E R M O N

SERMON IV.

ACTS ii. 47.

*And the Lord added to the Church daily
such as should be saved.*

TH E Eternal Son of God having taken our Nature upon him, and in it, by his *One Oblation of himself once offered*, made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, *He is now able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.* But Heb. 7.25. forasmuch as *He took not on him the Nature* c. 2. v. 16. *of Angels, but the Seed of Abraham; the* Jud. 6. *Angels, which kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation, are all still reserved in everlasting Chains, under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.* And as for those who partake of that Nature, which he assumed, and in which he suffered, and

and so are capable of Pardon and Salvation by him, it is much to be feared, that a great, if not the greatest part of them, also will, notwithstanding what he hath done and suffered for them, perish everlastingly. Not by reason of any Defect or Insufficiency in his Merits and Power to save them, but by reason of their own Obstinacy or Negligence, in not performing those easy Conditions which he requires of them, in order to their being actually vested in that Salvation which he hath purchased for them. But whosoever, among the Sons of Men, will come up to his most gracious Terms, and submit themselves wholly to be governed and saved by him, he will take Care that they shall be certainly saved, and advanced to eternal Glory in Heaven. And for that Purpose he always so orders it in his Providence, that all such are first admitted into, and made Members of that Church, which he hath established upon earth, as the Holy Ghost here witnesseth, saying, *And the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved.*

But what is the meaning of this? What is the understanding of which Words we should consider.

First, What is the meaning of *added to the Church*? by the Church?

Secondly, What is the meaning of *such as should be saved*?

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, What by the Lord's adding to the Church, daily such as should be saved?

As for the *First*, we must remember, that when our Lord was upon Earth, said he would build himself a Church, and that upon such a Rock, *that the Gates of Hell* ^{Matt. 16. 18.} *should not prevail against it.* In Order whereunto, he first chose twelve Persons, called his Apostles, to whom he revealed the Design he came into the World about, and the great Mysteries of the Gospel; and then sent them out to acquaint others with what he had taught them, and to work Miracles for the Confirmation of it: And to admit all such as would receive it into their Society, by baptizing of them. By which ^{Joh. 4. 12.} means he soon had a considerable number of Disciples; out of which he selected seventy others, to whom he gave Power also *to preach the Gospel, and to work Miracles.* ^{Luke 10. 1.} And having thus laid the Foundation, he soon after purchased to himself an Universal Church, with his own most precious Blood. And, rising again the third day, he presently took care to settle the perpetual Government of it, by granting to his Apostles the like Power and Commission which he had received from his Father for that purpose. And then he gave them Orders

Matt. 28.
19, 20.

ders to go and preach the Gospel to all Nations, to make them his Disciples by baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and to teach them all things that he had commanded them; assuring them withal, that he himself, by his Holy Spirit, would be with them, and their Successors, to the end of the World.

Our Lord having thus done all things which were necessary for the Establishment of his Church upon Earth, he ascended up into Heaven, there also to take the supreme Care of it. And ten Days after, upon the Day of *Pentecost*, he, according to his Promise, sent down the Holy Ghost in a miraculous Manner upon his Apostles, to assist them in speaking the Languages of all Nations, in order to their Conversion, and to set home what they preached upon the Hearts of those who heard it: Which wrought so effectually with them, that by one short Sermon preached the same Day

Acts 2. 41.

by St. Peter, About three Thousand Souls received the Word gladly, and were baptized. And from that Day forward, many others did so.

Who therefore in my Text, are said to be added to the Church, that is, to the Society, or Congregation of the faithful People before described; consisting of the Apostles, as the Governours of it, and of such as were joined to them, and held Com-
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munion with them in the Word and Sacraments, which our Lord had Instituted.

And when the said Society was dispers'd, as it soon was, over the whole World, it was still the same, and retain'd the same Name, being still called the Church. And not only the whole, but wheresoever any part of it was settled in any City, and the Territories belonging to it; that also was called the Church of that City, as the Church of *Hierusalem*, the Church of *Corinth*, &c. And wheresoever there were several such Cities and Churches in them belonging to any Province or Country, they are called the Churches of that Country, as the Churches of *Asia*, *Macedonia*, &c. But as every private Christian is a Member of some particular Church, so is every particular Church a Member of the *Catholick* or *Universal*, which is always meant, when we read in Scripture of the Church in general, without the Addition of Place or Country. As where it is said, *That Christ also* Eph. 5: *loved the Church, and Christ is the Head of the* 25. *Church.* So here, *And the Lord added to the* ver. 23. *Church daily*

Such as should be Saved, or such as are Saved, as the word may be render'd : But the Sense is much the same. For our Salvation plainly begins in this Life, although it be perfect'd only in the other. It com-
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Acts 2.
ver. 40.

menceth from our Repentance and Conversion; from our being saved from our Sins, or *from this untoward Generation*, as the Apostle in this Chapter words it. And they, and only they, who are thus saved from their Sins upon Earth, can ever attain to the Salvation of their Souls in Heaven. By such therefore as are, or should be Saved, we are to understand such as being prick'd in their Hearts, and convinc'd of their former Errors in Opinion and Practice, do heartily Repent of them, and gladly receive the Word, and embrace the terms propounded in the Gospel, for the Pardon of their Sins, and for the Assistance of God's Grace and Spirit, that they may so serve him here, as to enjoy him for ever. Such as these, which shall certainly be Saved, *the Lord daily added to the Church.*

What we are to understand by that Phrase, even the Lord's adding them to the Church, may be easily and clearly gathered from the Context. For these doubtless were added to the Church after the same manner as the 3000 were upon the day
 Act. 2. 41. *Pentecost.* Now of those, it is here said, that *they were Baptized*: Which was the way that our Lord had Instituted for the Admission of any into his Church. And then it follows in the next Verse, that *they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine,*
 ver. 42. *and*

and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers; that is, They constantly professed to believe the Doctrine delivered by the Apostles; they held constant Communion or Fellowship with them, as became Members of that Society, whereof the Apostles and their Successors were deputed Governours by Christ himself; they frequented the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the publick Prayers of the Church. By which means, they were so added to the Church, as to continue in it, and neglect no Duty which was enjoin'd, or perform'd by it. And thus, questionless it was, that the Lord afterwards, also added to the Church daily such as should be saved.

A thing much to be observ'd; especially, when the Church of Christ is so slighted and undervalued, as it is in our days. For it is plain, from these words, that our Lord did not only thus *add to his Church daily such as should be Saved*; but he hath left it upon Record, that all Generations might know that he did so, and by consequence, that all which shall be Saved, must be added to the Church as they were. Forasmuch as this being the Way and Method that he hath settled in the World for the saving of Souls, or for the applying that Salvation to them, which he hath Purchased for them: We

have no ground to expect that he should ever recede from it; especially, considering how strictly he himself hath observ'd it, even to a Miracle; as might easily be shewn from several Instances in the Holy Scripture. I shall mention only three, which are very remarkable;

Act. 10. 6. The first shall be that of *Cornelius* the Centurion, whose Prayers and Alms being gone up for a Memorial before God; God was pleased to send down an Angel to him. What to do? To reveal the Mysteries of the Gospel to him? To tell him what he must believe and do, that he might be Saved? No, his Commission was only to direct *Cornelius*, to send for *Peter* the Apostle of Christ, who should tell him what he ought to do. And at the same time that he sent for him, *Peter* had a Vision from Heaven, whereby he was fully assur'd, that he ought to receive the said *Cornelius* into the Church; and therefore he accordingly did so. From whence we may observe, what care our Lord took, what supernatural Means he us'd, to bring *Cornelius* into his Church, in order to his saving of him.

The next Instance shall be that of the Eunuch, Treasurer to *Candace* Queen of the *Ethiopians*, who having been at *Hierusalem*
 Act. 8. 26. to worship God; The Angel of the Lord
 spake

spake to *Philip* to go to such a Place : when ^{Acts 8.} he came there, he saw the Eunuch sitting ^{26.} in a Chariot ; and the Spirit bad him go near to that Chariot ; which when he had done, he heard the Eunuch read the Prophet *Isaiah*. From whence *Philip* took Occasion to expound the whole Gospel to him : Infomuch, that before they parted, he was ^{v. 32.} baptized, and so added to the Church. At the same time that the Lord sent his Angel to order *Philip* to go and meet the Eunuch, he could have sent him directly to the Eunuch himself. And when the Spirit spake to *Philip* to join himself to the Chariot where the Eunuch was, he could, if he had pleased, have spoken to the Eunuch himself, and have caused him to understand the Scriptures without the Assistance of any Man. But it seems, that our Lord having now established his Church upon Earth, as he would not send his Angel to do it, so neither would the Spirit himself undertake to direct the Eunuch how he might be saved without the Church ; but only to bring him into the Church, that so he might be saved.

But that which is most of all to be observed in this Case, is, the Conversion of *St. Paul* ; to whom, our Lord himself was pleased to appear in a miraculous Manner, and to converse familiarly with him. And

yet he himself would not make known any part of the Gospel to him; no, not so much as that he was the Christ, but only that he was Jesus whom he persecuted. Yea, although *Saul* asked him particularly, what he would have him to do; yet our Lord would not tell him himself, but sends him to the Church to know it; *Arise*, saith he, *go into the City, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* And then he appear'd miraculously to *Ananias*, one of his Disciples in that City, and ordered him to go to *Saul*, and acquaint him with what he must do. By which Means he being fully instructed in the Gospel, was baptized, and so brought into the Church. From all which it is plain and evident, that our Lord is so resolved to add those who shall be saved to his Church, that he would rather work Miracles to bring Men into it, than save any without it.

Cyprian
ep. 62. ad
Pompon
ep. 73. ad
Jubajum.
Ambrosi.
in Psal.
40. Au-
gustin. ep.
ad Donat.
post Con-
De Symi.
a te catech.
lib. 4. c.
12.

Seeing therefore, that the Holy Ghost hath so positively affirmed, that the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved; and likewise hath given us such extraordinary Instances of it, it is no wonder that the Fathers so frequently assert, that there is no Salvation to be had out of Christ's holy Catholick Church; but that whosoever would be a Member of the Church Triumphant in Heaven, must first be

be a Member of the Church here Militant on Earth.

Now that which I principally design, in discoursing upon this Subject, is, to enquire into the Reasons of it. Not that I think it necessary or possible for us fully to understand that infinite Reason which our Lord hath for all his Actions, and in a particular manner for this. It is sufficient for us that we know, that he is both able and willing to save us, and that this is the way wherein he is pleased to do it. And therefore we, who can never be saved any other way but by him, are obliged by our own Interest to submit to it, whether we apprehend any Reason for it or no. Howsoever, seeing it is a Matter wherein the Glory of his Name, the Honour of his Church, and the Welfare of our own Souls is so highly concerned, by his Leave and Assistance, which I humbly beg his Divine Majesty to vouchsafe unto me, I shall present you with some such Considerations, from whence ye may conclude it to be, both Reasonable and Necessary, that they who *shall be saved*, should be *added to the Church*.

For *First*, it is acknowledged by all Christians, that in order to our being saved by Christ, it is necessary that we know and believe his Gospel, and the Fundamen-

tal Truths revealed in it. And therefore as God would have all Men to be saved, so for that Purpose, he would have them come to the *Knowledge of the Truth*. But it is as plain also, that, as things now stand, we cannot come to the Knowledge of the Truth, but only by the Church, which is the Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ, and so, as the Apostle saith, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; by which the Truth is upheld, and maintained in the World, the Gospel preserved and propagated, and so true Religion and the way of Salvation by Christ, is divulged and made known to Mankind. Infomuch, that although I do not doubt, but that whilst the Church was confined to one Family, God, the Creator and Preserver of all Mankind, did manifest himself in an extraordinary Manner, to some that were not of that Church. Yet now that the Partition-Wall is broken down, and the Church dispersed over the whole World; now, I say, we have no ground to expect any such extraordinary Revelations; but they that would know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, must go to the Church for it; where they may read the Scriptures, and have them truly interpreted to them, and so fully understand what God would have them

them to believe, concerning himself and his Son. For what greater Revelations can be expected, than either by an Angel, or by the Spirit, or else by our Blessed Saviour? Yet, in the Instances before-mentioned, we see that the Angel would not instruct *Cornelius*, the Spirit would not instruct the Eunuch, our Lord himself would not instruct *Saul*, in the Articles of the Christian Faith; but they all sent them, every one his Man, to the Church, to be instructed by her. Wherefore seeing we cannot be saved without the Knowledge of the Gospel, nor know the Gospel, but by the Church; it is no wonder that *The Lord addeth to the Church daily such as shall be saved.*

Moreover, as we cannot come to the Knowledge of God's Word, but by his Church, so neither can we rightly believe what is there revealed, nor duly perform what is there commanded, without the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit, which is given by the Ministry of the Church, and shall abide with it for ever, as our Lord hath promised. For the Promise being made only to Christ's Disciples, and so ^{John 14.} to his Church, none but such as are of that ^{26.} Society can receive any Benefit by it. And therefore when they who heard St. Peter's Sermon, were solicitous to know what to do

Acts 2.
38

do; the Apostle said to them, *Repent and be baptized, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and you shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost*; plainly implying, that they must first be baptized, and so received into the Church, before the Holy Ghost would come upon them. There are many such Passages in the New Testament, which clearly shew, that they only which are of the Church, can partake of the Spirit which is in it; that they only who are Members of that Body, whereof Christ is Head; and can be influenced and assisted by that blessed Spirit which flows from him. And this certainly is one great Reason why the Lord addeth to the Church daily such as shall be saved.

But that which I intend, by the Blessing of God, to insist chiefly upon, is taken from the Method and Means of Salvation, which are used in the Church, and no where else, as they ought to be. I know it is by Christ only that we can attain to Salvation, and that it is by the Spirit only that we can be fitted and qualified for it. But howsoever we must not, we cannot expect that he should act upon us immediately from himself, without the use of those Means which he himself hath prescribed for that End: for he would never have prescribed them, but that he designed to
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act by them. I know also that the Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments, and all the Means of Grace which he hath ordained, is not to be ascribed to themselves, but only to his Spirit moving in them, and working together with them. But howsoever, in that he makes use of those Means in his working upon us, it is necessary that we also make use of them, if we desire to be wrought upon by him: and by consequence, that we be added to and continue in the Church, if we would be saved; forasmuch as it is there only that we can enjoy those Means, which our Saviour hath appointed in order thereunto.

To prove this we need only consider the Means which Christ's *Holy Catholick Church* hath prescribed out of his Word, and the excellent Course she takes to train up her Children for Heaven, and fit them to converse with the Holy Angels, and with Christ himself in the other World. For he that duly considers this, will soon acknowledge, that the like is no where else to be found, but only in the Church.

But how shall we know what the Catholick Church hath always done in this Case? Must we read over the Councils, consult the Fathers, and search the Records of the Church in all Ages? No. We need not give our selves that Trouble: For,
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whatsoever Means of Grace and Salvation have been used by the Catholick Church in all Ages ; the same, and none else, are to this Day used by our own. Infomuch that if we do but cast our Eye upon the Church we live in, we may in that, as in a Mirrour , behold the constant Practice of the Uuniversal Church, in all things necessary to Men's Salvation.

This therefore is that which I shall now do, even briefly survey the Constitution of our Church, and consider the excellent Method observ'd in it for the bringing of Souls to Heaven. In order whereunto, I must first premise one thing in general ; which is, that the Bishops and Pastors of our Church having, by a successive Imposition of Hands, continued all along from the Apostles, received the same Spirit which was breathed into them ; and so regularly succeeding the Apostles, and supplying now their Places in this Part of the World, hence they cannot but have the same Power and Authority which the Apostles had, to confer, by the laying on of their Hands, as they did, both the Spirit which they themselves received, and so their whole Office upon other Bishops ; and likewise so much of it as is necessary for the right Administration of the Word and Sacraments to other inferiour Officers in
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the Church, which we call Priests and Deacons: Of which there are so many ordained every Year by the Imposition of their Hands, that our whole Church is sufficiently supplied with them. So that there is no Parish, or particular Congregation of Christians in the whole Kingdom, but hath or may have a Priest thus ordained, and so rightly qualified for the effectual Administration of the Word and Sacraments, and other Means of Grace and Salvation among them. The Spirit which they have received, being always ready at the Execution of their several Offices, to bless and sanctifie what is done by them, to the Sanctification and Salvation of those who attend upon it, and prepare themselves for it, as they ought.

But, seeing the Means of Grace thus administred by them, become effectual to the Purposes for which they are used, only by this the Co-operation of Christ's Spirit with them; hence all that desire or expect any real Benefit from them, must look higher than the Means themselves, trusting upon God for his Blessing upon them, and for the Assistance of his Spirit in them, according to the Promises which he hath made to that Purpose; without which we have no ground to expect they should be performed to us.

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This being premised concerning the Means of Grace in general, we shall now consider them particularly, in the same Method wherein the Catholick, or, which is all one, our Church appoints them to be used. By which we shall clearly see, what an excellent Course she takes to bring up her Children in the true Faith and Fear of God, and so to make them Heirs to the the Crown of Glory. For which Purpose it is necessary that we begin at the first Admission of them into her Communion by Baptism. Concerning which we may observe that the Errors and Iniquities of the Times and Place we live in are such, that there are many Heathens amongst us, Persons of riper Years and yet not baptized: For whose sakes therefore, our Church, to shew her Readiness to receive them upon their Repentance and Conversion, hath appointed an Office for Baptizing of them. For which there was no Occasion in this Nation for many Ages until now. But although there be many such Persons now among us absolutely consider'd, yet they are but very few in comparison of those who are baptized in their Infancy. And therefore I shall begin with those, and concern my self no further at present with the other.

A Child therefore being born of Christian Parents, and by them offered to the Church to be received into her Society; the Church, in Obedience to Christ's Command, according to the Practice of the Universal Church, expresseth her Willingness to receive it. But withal, considering the Frailty and Mortality of the Parents, she requireth some other Persons, call'd Godfathers and Godmothers, to be specially present at it, as Witnesses, Proxies, and Sureties. As Witnesses, to attest upon Occasion, that this Child was baptized: As Proxies for the Child, by whom he may promise (or they in his Name) that he will perform the Conditions of the Covenant which he is now admitted into: And lastly, as Sureties to the Church, that this Child shall be brought up in the Christian Religion. So great Care doth our Church take, that all who are admitted into her Society may believe and live as becometh Christians.

By these therefore, the Child being brought to the Church, it is there presented to the Lord, (as Christ was in the Temple) whose Minister finding it there, and understanding that it hath not yet been Baptized, puts the People in mind of the necessity of Baptism, and exhorts them to pray, that this Child may have it administered

nistred effectually to him. Upon which, the whole Congregation there present, join with him in supplicating the most High God, that he would Wash, and Sanctifie this Child, so that it may be Saved. Then the Minister reads to them part of the Gospel concerning the Children that were brought to Christ; draws some plain and proper Inferences from it, and gives God thanks for the same. After that, he addresseth himself to the Sureties, and acquaints them, that as Christ hath Promised to hear their Prayers, for this Child which they have now brought to him; so the Child must for his part Promise, by them his Sureties, that he will Renounce the Devil and all his Works, constantly believe God's Holy Word, and Obediently keep his Commandments. Which being accordingly done, by Questions propounded by the Minister, in the Name of the Church, and Answer'd by the Sureties in the Name of the Child; the Minister prayeth, that the Child may have Grace to perform what he hath now promised. And then having ask'd by what Name they would have the Child call'd, he poureth Water upon it, and calling it by that Name, he saith, *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:* Which being the very words wherewith
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our Lord commanded this Sacrament should be Administred; the Child is now fully and perfectly Baptized. And to testify her Acknowledgment that it is so, the Church immediately receiveth it into her Communion, and solemnly declareth it to be now a Christian, not only by Words, but also by making a Cross upon the Child's Fore-head; the common Sign whereby Christians were always distinguished from *Jews* and *Heathens*: the Minister saying, in the Name of the Church, *we receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, and sign it with the Sign of the Cross, &c.* After which, the Minister stirs up the People there present, to give God thanks for this Favour, and to Pray unto him, that this Child may lead the rest of his Life according to this beginning. Which done, he puts the Sureties in mind of their Duty, now incumbent upon them, to see that Child be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn Vow, Promise, and Profession he hath made by them, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Souls Health; and then to bring it to the Bishop to be Confirm'd by him.

This is in short, the Substance of that excellent Office which our Church hath appointed for the publick Baptism of Infants.

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But in case of extream Necessity, lest the Child should die without it, she admitteth of *Private Baptism*, and absolutely requireth no more in the Administration of it, than what is essential to it, even that the Child be Baptized with Water, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. But if it lives, she requireth that it be afterwards brought to the Church, and that whatsoever was before omitted of the publick Office, be there performed to it.

Now, the Church having thus gotten a new Member added to her, and taken Security for its Education in the Faith of Christ; for the better performance of it, she hath drawn up a short *Catechism* for the Child to learn (when he is able) consisting of all things necessary for it to know, and nothing else. And that she may be certified, whether the Child hath learnt it or no; and likewise contribute what she can, towards his understanding all and every thing contained in the said *Catechism*, she commands that the Minister of the Parish where he lives, do frequently and openly in the Church, Examine and Instruct him in it.

By this means therefore, this new Christian, now come to Years of Discretion, understanding what his Sureties promised

in his Name, when he was Baptiz'd, is by them or some other, brought to the Bishop to be Confirm'd by him. In order whereunto, he, in the Presence of God, and of the Congregation there assembled, renews the solemn Promise and Vow which was then made in his Name, ratifying and confirming the same in his own Person, and acknowledging himself bound to believe and do all those things which his Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for him. And that he may be enabled so to do; the Bishop, with the whole Congregation there present, jointly Pray to God, to assist and strengthen him with his Grace and Spirit. And then the Bishop, after the Example of the Holy Apostles, lays his Hand upon the Child's Head, and Prays to God for him, saying, *Defend, O Lord, this thy Child, with thy Heavenly Grace, &c.* After which the whole Congregation join again with the Bishop in some other Prayers to the same purpose. All which being duly perform'd as it ought, cannot certainly but be very effectual to the great Ends and Purposes for which it is used. As Christians in all Ages have found by their own Experience.

Our Christian being thus confirm'd, he is now look'd upon in the Eye of the Church, as no longer a Minor, but of full Age to

receive and enjoy all the Blessings and Privileges which his Heavenly Father in the Holy Gospel hath settled upon him. And therefore his spiritual Guardians, the God-fathers and Godmothers being discharged, he is now to stand upon his own Legs. And well he may, having so indulgent, pious, and wise a Mother upon Earth, as the Church is, to take care of him. For, if he be but Dutiful and Obedient to her, and follow those good Directions which she gives him, there is no fear of falling. For she considers what potent Enemies he is to Fight with, that the Flesh, the World, and the Devil which he renounced, will all strive to recover their Possession of him; and therefore, she out of God's Word, furnisheth him with such spiritual Armour, that if he be not failing to himself in the use of it, he may not only withstand, but conquer them all. She considers every Distemper he can be subject to; and finding suitable Remedies prescribed for it in the Holy Scriptures, she directs him how to apply them, so as to prevent, or cure it. In short, she considers the great Work he has to do, no less than to work out his Salvation with Fear and Trembling, that he can never do it, without the Assistance of God's Spirit, and that he hath no ground to expect any such Assistance, but in the
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use of those Means which God hath appointed for that end ; hence she often calls upon him, to use those Means, Instructs him how to do it aright, assists him in it, and so keeps him in continual Exercise and Employment, about the Work he hath to do, that he may be Saved.

For in the first place, considering, that in order to the preventing those many Sins which are occasioned by the prevailing Humours of the Body, and also to the preserving his Mind in a fit temper, both to perform his Duties unto God, and to receive Divine Illuminations and Assistances from him ; it is necessary to keep his Body always under. And considering likewise, that God himself hath for that very purpose commanded not only Temperance at all times, but at some times Abstinence and Fasting : Hence the Church hath set apart, some certain Days every Year, whereon her Son, we now speak of, should by Fasting, bring his Body into a constant subjection to his Soul ; lest otherwise, if there were no set times appointed for it, he should be, as most are, too apt to neglect it, and never Fast at all, or at most, but very seldom, and so to no purpose.

Now, the Days which she directs him to spend in Fasting, are the Forty Days of *Lent*, according to the Custom of the Ca-

tholick Church, every Year before *Easter*; and the three *Rogation-days*, immediately preceeding *Holy-Thursday*. Besides which, she appoints three Days, *viz. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday*, in each of the four *Ember Weeks*, whereon to Fast, not only for the purposes aforesaid, but likewise that he may the more effectually implore a Blessing, both upon the Bishops who are to Ordain, and upon those who shall be Ordained to any Holy Function the *Sunday* following; which if he neglect to do, he must blame himself, if any unworthy Persons be then admitted into the Sacred Ministry of the Church. Whereas, if he perform his Duty aright at that time, he may upon good grounds expect a greater Blessing from the Word and Sacraments administered by those, who are then ordain'd. Be sure his Prayers will, one time or other, return into his own Bosom; and therefore, I heartily wish, that all the devout and pious Souls in the Church, would, after the Example of Christ and his Apostles, join together in Fasting and Praying, upon so solemn Occasions as those are. What a glorious Church? What an excellent Clergy should we then have? But to return to our Christian. The *Lent-Fast* coming but once a Year, and the *Ember Weeks* but once a Quarter, for fear lest his Body should
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in ~~the~~ meantime grow rampant, or his Passions Head-strong and Unruly, the Church orders him to Fast one Day in every Week, *viz. Friday*, the Day whereon our Lord was Crucified; as also the Eves or Vigils of some certain *Holy Days*, the better to perform the Duties, and to Praise God for the Mercies commemorated, the Day following. And if he be Temperate in all things, and besides that, observes these prescrib'd by our Church, as really Days of Fasting and Abstinence, it is very much if his Body be not kept in due subjection to his Soul. But if at any time he finds it is not, he may add some more days as he finds occasion; especially, *Wednesdays*, which were also observ'd by the *Primitive Christians*; and upon which, our Church hath appointed the *Litany* to be used, as well as upon *Fridays*. And whatsoever degrees of Grace and Vertue he shall attain to, he must never think that, so long as continues in Health, he stands in no need of Fasting. As considering, that the great Apostle himself, was forc'd to keep his Body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that ^{1 Cor. 9. 27.} by any means, when he had Preached unto others, he himself should be a cast-away.

By this means therefore our Christian, keeping his Mind continually serene, and free from any Annoyance or Disturbance

from the Humours of the Body, he is always in a right disposition to receive such Impressions as are necessary to the making him a real and true Saint. Which that he may be, the Church useth all the means she can, to keep his Soul continually possessed with a deep Sense of God, and with as high Apprehensions of the great Mysteries of the Gospel, as it is capable of. For which purpose she so orders it, that every thing relating to the Publick Service, which she requires him to perform to God, as well as the Service it self, strikes an Awe and Reverence of the Divine Majesty into him, as being set apart and appropriated only to that use. Thus she appoints some certain Days, wherein to lay aside all other Business, and apply himself wholly to this. Especially she, out of God's own Word, enjoins him to keep holy the first Day in every Week, which is therefore called the *Lord's Day*, because devoted to his Service. Besides which, to keep the great Mysteries of the Gospel always fresh in his Mind and Memory, she prescribes him some certain Days every Year, whereon to commemorate the *Nativity, Circumcision and Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, his Presentation in the Temple, his Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, and his Mission of the Holy Ghost; the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin;*

Virgin; with the *Lives and Deaths of the Apostles and Evangelists* did, who not only propagate the Gospel in the World, but sealed it too with their own Blood. For the very setting apart of these and the like Days, for the publick Worshipping of God, conduceth very much to his remembering and understanding the great things transacted on them: and so to his better apprehending and admiring the Power and Goodness of God discovered in them.

And for this reason also it is, that she requires him to perform his Publick Devotions to God in God's own House, a Place consecrated wholly to him and his Service. And for his better doing of it there, she appoints one of God's own Ministers, a Person set apart for that very Office, to assist him in it. And she commands this Person, at that time, to be in a different Habit from what he wears at any other time: and all to take off our Christian's Thoughts, as much as may be, from all things else, and to fix them only upon God and the great Work he is now about. The Place, the Minister, the Habit, every one putting him in mind, that he is not now about any Common or Worldly Employment; but in the special Presence of Almighty God, worshipping him, and therefore, both in Soul and Body, should carry himself

himself accordingly, with Reverence and Godly Fear.

And then, as for the Service it ielf, the Church hath provided him fuch a *Liturgie*, wherein all things are done to his Edifying. So that he can never come to God's Houfe, but, if it be not his own Fault, he may return home again Wifer and Better than he came: for he can want for nothing but he there prays for it; he can have nothing but he there gives God thanks for it; he can be ignorant of nothing, that is needful for him to know, but he is there taught it. And, left he fhould at any time feduced into Error, or tempted to Sin; left he fhould grow flat in his Devotions, cool in his Charity, remifs in any Duty to God or Man, or carelefs of his own Eternal Good, ſhe hath order'd the Holy Scriptures to be often expounded, or a Sermon preached to him; and that too, not by any one that will undertake it (for then the Remedy might prove worfe than the Difeaſe) but by one who, by Fasting and Prayer, and the Solemn Impoſition of the Biſhop's Hands, is ordained to that Office; by one who hath ſubſcribed to all the Articles of Religion, by one who hath publickly declared his unfeigned Aſſent and Conſent to the Uſe of all things contained and preſcribed in the Book of Common-Prayer; by one approved

ved of, and licensed thereunto, by the Bishop of the Diocese, who, if he find just Cause for it, is empower'd and obliged to take away his License again, and to suspend from the Execution of his Office. So that if our Christian lives under a Minister that doth not act according to the Rules, or doth not preach according to the Doctrine of the Gospel, or doth not perform his Duty in every thing as he ought; it is, in a great measure, his own fault, in that he doth not acquaint the Bishop with it, whose Office it is to redress such Grievances as these are. So that if he will himself, he may be sure to have the Word of God rightly, duly and constantly administer'd to him: and not only the Word, but likewise the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he is required to receive as oft as possibly he can, to put him in mind of what his Saviour hath done and suffered for his Sins, and so to confirm his Faith in him, inflame his Love to him, and to dispose and qualifie him the better to converse with Christ in Heaven; to which nothing contributes more than frequent Addresses to him in this Holy Sacrament upon Earth.

Thus therefore it is, that he who holds constant Communion with our Church, is continually employ'd by her about some or other of those Means which Christ hath ordained

ordained for his Salvation, and to which he hath promised the Assistance of his own Spirit. By virtue whereof, the Christian, we have hitherto discoursed of, is enabled to deny *Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* But having spent some time in such holy Exercises as these are, we must suppose him at length to be seized with some Distemper, in order to his Departure into the other World. And then the Church, to shew her great care of him to the last, requires the Minister of the Parish where he lives, to go and give him a solemn Visit. And that he may be sure to have the best Directions that can be given him at that great Juncture, She her self hath drawn up an Order for the *Visitation* of him, and likewise for the *Administration* of the Holy Communion to him; which is the best Cordial he can take to support his Spirits, and carry him through the great Work which he hath now to do. And when it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great Mercy, to take unto himself the Soul of this our dear Brother, the Minister, by the Order and in the Name of the Church, commits his Body to the Ground, *in sure and certain Hope of a joyful Resurrection to Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Thus

Thus we see how our Christian from his first Admission into the Church Militant upon Earth, is conducted, and governed all along by her, until at length he is advanced to the Church Triumphant in Heaven. From whence it is easy to observe what an excellent Method she proceeds in, and what effectual Means she useth for the attaining so great an End: And by consequence, how necessary it is for all of us to be so added to the Church, as to continue stedfast in her Communion, and carefully to follow all her Directions, if ever we desire to be saved. For although I have instanced only in one single Person, we are all equally concerned in what hath been said of him. Yea, every one of us should look upon himself, as the Person spoken of all along. For I hope we are all baptized, and so admitted into the Church, as I supposed him to be. And therefore if we do but observe these Rules, which she out of God's holy Word hath laid before us, as I supposed him to do, there is no doubt but that we also ere long, shall be glorified Saints in Heaven.

But I am very sensible, that for all the great Care that our Church taketh of all her Children, many of them are very undutiful and disobedient to her, and so careless of their own Salvation, that they

they do not only neglect, but despise the Means which she administers for the Attainment of it. But what then doth she do with such as these? In short, she in great Wisdom and Prudence makes use of all the fair Means that can be thought of, for the reclaiming of them. But if that will not do, she delivers them over to *Saturn*, for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord. But seeing the Excellency of our Church, appeareth in the Exercise of her Power, as much as in any thing else, it may not be amiss if we take a take a short View of that wise and excellent Method which she observeth in it. *

First, therefore our Church being, by the Blessing of God, of the same extent with the Kingdom in which we live, and as so, subject to the same Prince, as its supreme Governour upon Earth, for the better Management of that Power which Christ hath left with it, it is divided into two Provinces, over each of which there is an Archbishop, each Province is subdivided into several Dioceses, over every one whereof there is a Bishop: In every Diocese, there is one or more Archdeacons: Every Archdeaconry is divided into several Deanaries, and every Deanary into several Parishes. And in every Parish, as
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there is a Priest rightly ordained for the *Administration of the Word and Sacraments* to all the Christians that live there, so there are other Officers called *Church-Wardens*, chosen every year, and appointed, not only to look to the Fabrick of the Church belonging to the said Parish, and to provide all things necessary for the worshipping of God in it; but likewise to inspect the Lives and Actions of all the Christians that live there; to take notice of all that live in any notorious Sin, or neglect the means which God hath ordain'd for their Salvation, and to certifie and present their Names to such Officers which the Church hath appointed to consider what to do in such cases. And although such Persons, being Christians, are oblig'd by their Religion, to take all the Care they can of their Neighbours Souls, and therefore to acquaint the Church with their evil and pernicious Courses, that she may interpose her Power for the reclaiming of them, yet to bind them more strictly to it, when they are admitted into that Office, they take a solemn Oath, in the Presence of Almighty God, truly and faithfully to execute the same, to the best of their Skill and Knowledge. And that none of them may be ignorant of what they are to present, they have *Articles of Enquiry* deliver'd

deliver'd to them, wherein all and every thing and Person presentable, is plainly and distinctly set down.

And as this is certainly the best and surest way that the Church could ever find out, whereby to understand which of her Members either neglect those Duties which should further their Salvation, or commit such Sins as will impede and hinder it; so is the Course too that she takes for the correcting and reforming them. For as the Church-wardens are obliged to make their Presentments twice a Year, and may do it oftner if Occasion require it: So is the Bishop obliged to go about his Diocese once every three Years, that he may understand the state of the Flock committed to him, of which he must one Day give a strict Account to the great Shepherd of Souls. And lest any thing should happen in the mean time, that may require a more speedy Examination, he, according to the Custom of the Primitive and Catholick Church, hath one or more Archdeacons under him, canonically Ordained, Authorized, and required every one to visit so much of the Diocese as is under his Jurisdiction, once a Year, or oftner if need be, to receive the foresaid Presentments, and to inspect, and, what in him lies, reform all Irregularities, either in Clergy or Laity. And more-
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over that the Church may never want an opportunity of being informed of any Misdemeanors that she is bound to take Cognisance of, she hath other Officers both under the Bishop and Arch-Deacon, who keep her Courts all the Year long, as occasion happens, and have power to cite all Delinquents that are presented, and to Examine and Try all such Ecclesiastical Causes and Matters as are brought before them.

But here we must observe, that as the Church-Wardens of every Parish who present Offenders to any of these Courts, are always Lay-men, so the Chancellors, Commissaries, Officials, and other Officers in these Courts, who receive and examine such Presentments, are ordinarily Lay-men too. And it is but reasonable, and in some Sense necessary they should be so. For if none but Clergy-men should search into the Faults of the Laity, the Laity might be apt to suspect they were too severely dealt with. Whereas being tryed by Men of their own rank and brotherhood before Sentence is passed upon them, they cannot blame the Church for it, nor imagine that She can have any other Design upon them, but only to do them good and make them better. Besides that, the Causes which are brought into these Courts, are many,

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and take up a great deal of time before they can be brought to an Issue, and therefore if Clergymen only should be employ'd in them, it would take them off too much from the Ministry and of the Word and Sacraments, which they are oblig'd by their Office continually to attend. Especially considering that the Causes are not only many, but diverse too, and some very intricate and mixt; so that to search into the bottom of them all, and fully to understand what is just and meet to be done in every one of them, requires great knowledge and skill in the whole Body of the Ecclesiastical Laws, and the Temporal too, so far as they any way concern the Church: Which no Man can attain to, without making it his constant Business and Study. Which not consisting with the many other Duties incumbent upon those who are Ordained to any Holy Function; the Church always found it necessary that her Bishops, and all that Exercise her Jurisdiction under them, should have some of her other Members learned in the Laws, to direct and assist them in the Administration of it, and under them to transact and try all Causes relating thereunto. Which doubtless, all things considered, is the best way the Church could ever think of whereby to secure her Governours from
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being malign'd, her Laws from being violated, and so her Members from being injured through mistake or ignorance.

Neither must we look upon this as any Novel Invention, but as the Sense and Practice of the universal Church for many Ages: For we find such Ecclesiastical Officers, as those are, mentioned near 1200 Years ago by *Justinian* the Emperor, who in his Code and Novel, sometimes calls them by their Greek Name (a) *Ecdicos Ecclesiae*, or *Ecclesiedicos*, sometimes by the Latin, (b) *Defensores Ecclesiae*; that is, properly, Church Advocates, Ecclesiastical Lawyers, and sometimes *Episcoporum Ecclesiedices*, the Bishops Ecclesiastical Advocates, which he reckons amongst (c) Lay-Officers, and yet supposeth them to be in every Church, and to take care of the Affairs of it under the Bishop. Before this we meet with them in the (d) Novels of *Valentinian* the Third, as also in the Canons of the fourth General Council, held at *Chalcedon*, A. D. 451. which requires that Clergymen and Monks which stay at *Constantinople* without having any business there, should be expelled thence by the (e) *Ecdik*, or as we say, the Chancellor of the Church. And elsewhere the same General Council reckons

(a) L. 42.
C. de Episc.
cop. & cler.

(b) L. 6.
C. de his
qui ad Ec-
clesiam
confug.
Novel. 56.

(c) L. 42.
C. de Episc.
cop. & cler.

§ 9. L. 34.
C. de Episc.
cop. Audi-
entia, § 5.

(d) Valen-
tin. No-
vel. tit. 12.

(e). Chal-
ced. can. 23.

(f) *Ibid.*
can. 2.

these (f) *Ecdiks* or Advocates, amongst these Ecclesiastical Officers which are not admitted into Holy Orders, and yet ought not to give any Money for their Places. From whence it appears that these Lay Officers were at that time received and established in all the Provinces, and Dioceses of the Universal Church; for otherwise this general Council consisting of above Six hundred Bishops, gathered together from all Parts of the Christian World, would never have made any Laws about them.

How long before this they were brought into the Church I shall not undertake to determine. Only this we know that the (g) *Concil. Carthag. can. 100. Edit. Oxon.* African Bishops assembled in (g) Council A. D. 407. made it their request to the Emperors, *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, that they might have liberty to chuse and constitute Church-Advocates out of those who pleaded in the Civil Courts, who might manage the Affairs, and defend the Rights and Privileges of the Church there. And that this Request was readily granted, is plain from the Rescript of the said Emperors to that purpose, directed within Six Months after to the Proconsul of *Africa*, still extant in the (h) *Theodosian Code*. From whence it seems that those Advocates were not suffered before this time to plead

(b) L. 38
C. T. Epif.
cepis Ec-
cles. & cler.

plead for the Church in the Civil Courts of *Africa*; but it doth not follow but they might be employ'd before, both there and elsewhere in the Ecclesiastical. And it is very probable that these Offices began to be erected, if not before, at least soon after the Empire became Christian, so that the Church had free Liberty to Exercise her Power and Authority in it, and was not only allow'd to do it, but countenanced and assisted by the Secular Power. For then there was a Necessity of having such Officers, not only for the Reasons before mentioned, but likewise, because the Emperors themselves, in Favour of the Church, put forth several Edicts and Laws concerning Ecclesiastical Persons and Matters, which being drawn up in the same Form and Manner, and intermix'd with their Civil Laws, could never be duly executed but by Persons skilled in the Imperial as well as the Ecclesiastical Laws, and in the way and manner of proceeding upon them. And therefore from that time forward it was necessary that such Advocates as had been trained up in the Civil Law, should be appointed and empowered to order and manage the Ecclesiastical Courts under the Bishop in every Diocese, that so both the Laws of the Empire that had any relation to the

Church, and those which were made by the Church it self, might be duly executed in due Form and manner, so as not to contradict, but be assistant to one another.

But at what time, and for what Reasons soever these Officers were at first brought into the Church, it is manifest, from the aforesaid Canons of the Fourth General Council, that the Universal Church had then received them: And that they have been all along continued ever since, can be doubted of by none that are Conversant in Church History. Neither can any Man yet imagine that the Universal Church for so many Ages together should agree in such a thing as this, but upon very good Grounds and Reasons. Howsoever, the general Practice of the Catholick Church is a sufficient Obligation as well as Warrant to every particular Church to observe the same as near as it can. And therefore it was that our Church at the Reformation, looking upon herself as oblig'd to hold Communion with the Catholick, as well as to separate from the Romish Church, retained this Ancient and General Form of keeping her Courts by Advocates learned in the Civil and Canon Law; who are nominated and approved of by the Bishop in every

every Diocess, but receive their Power and Authority not only from him, but from the Laws of the Church: yea, and of the State too. There being scarce any Custom or Usage (upon which the Common Law of the Land is grounded) in the whole Kingdom that can plead longer Prescription than this can.

But seeing these, as all other Courts in the World, may be liable to abuses and corruptions, to prevent them as much as may be, the Church in her Canons doth not only require a *(i)* solemn Oath to be taken by every one that shall be admitted into any Office there, to deal uprightly and justly in the same, without respect or favour of Reward; but hath likewise provided *(k)* suitable Punishments to be inflicted upon these who shall either neglect their Duty, exceed their Commission, or do any thing unbeseeming the place they are in: And if, notwithstanding all this, any one shall be unjustly dealt with, or but think himself to be so, he may appeal from the lower to the higher Courts, from the Arch-Deacon to the Bishop; from the Bishop to the Arch-Bishop; and from him to the Queen, who being in all her Dominions supreme Governour over all Persons, in all Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal, as it is necessary that she

(i) Can.
127.

(k) Can.
134.

should have these Ecclesiastical as well as Temporal Courts under her, where such Causes may be judged, so when they are brought up so high as to herself, they must needs be finally determined, forasmuch as from her no Appeal can be to any other Court or Person upon Earth.

Now these Courts being thus Established in the Church: When any Offender is presented into any of them, he is cited to appear there, which if he neglect or refuse to do, he is pronounced Contumacious, one that resisteth and contemneth the Power that Christ hath given to his Church, which for many Reasons was always judged one of the greatest Sins that a Christian can be guilty of: and therefore is proceeded against accordingly. But if he appear, his Cause is impartially searched into; and if upon due Examination he be found Innocent, he is presently discharged: but if he appears to be guilty of any notorious Crime, which the Church is bound to take notice of, she useth all means possible to bring him to a just Sense of his Sin, to a hearty Repentance for it, and to make what Satisfaction he can for the Offence that he hath given to all good Christians by it. But if all other means prove ineffectual, she casts him out of her Communion,

munion, and so from the Society of all good Christians, according to the saying of our Lord, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man, and* ^{Mat. 18. 17.} *a Publican.* But so, that if he shall after-

wards repent and submit himself, the Church is always ready to receive him into her Bosom again, there to nourish, and provide all things for him that he may be saved.

Thus in that of our own, I have briefly run through the whole Constitution of the Catholick Church, and the several means that are used in it, and in it only, for the Salvation of Mens Souls, which whosoever seriously considers, can never wonder that they who shall be saved, should be added to the Church.

Nothing now remains but to shew what Influence the consideration of these things should have upon our Minds and Actions, which shall be soon dispatch'd. For if we recollect what hath been said upon this Subject, and lay it so together that we may take a full view of the whole method observed in the Church, for the making us Holy here, and Happy for ever, we cannot but easily see, both what Necessity there is of our being added to the Church in general, and what infinite cause we have to give our most humble and hearty thanks to God, both for his settling
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and restoring such a Church as this is to us. A Church wherein all the means of Grace and Salvation are so duly and effectually Administred to us, that if we be not failing to our selves in the use of them, we cannot but be saved. A Church so exactly conformable to the Catholick in all things, that none can separate from her without making a Schism in Christ's Mystical Body, and consequently endangering the Salvation of his own Soul. A Church so far exceeding those of *Rome* and *Geneva*, that would either Papists or Sectaries lay aside their Prejudices, and Impartially consider what our Church is, and compare it with their own, they would need no other Arguments to persuade them to return unto her, and to live and die in constant Communion with her. A Church, to say no more, as Orthodox in its Doctrine, as regular in its Discipline, as grave and solemn in its Worship, as agreeable to Scripture Rules, as well accommodated to the whole Design of the Gospel for the bringing of Souls to Heaven, as any Church in the whole World. And that such a Church as this should be at first planted amongst us, and after it had been destroy'd by the Malice of the Devil and his Agents should be again restored to us by the immediate hand
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of God, who can think of it without adoring the Hand that did it?

But we must remember to shew forth his Praise for so great a Mercy, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, by giving up our selves wholly to his Service, according to the Rules and Orders of the Church which he hath thus graciously settled amongst us; that as we have the best of Churches, we may be likewise the best of People; and so shame our Adversaries on all sides into an hearty compliance with our Ecclesiastical Constitutions, by letting them see how far we exceed them in true Piety and Devotion; and read the Excellency of our Church, in the Excellency of our Lives, who hold Communion with her. By this means, as many, by the Blessing of God, have been lately added to our Church, there will be daily more and more. This also would be a most effectual way, whereby to Secure and Defend our Church against *Heresie* and *Schism*, against *Popery* and *Superstition*, against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, and against all those Diabolical Stratagems, and Devices, those Seditious Principles and Practices, whereby it was destroyed once, and was like to have been so again, but very lately. For if we do but Live answerably to the Means that we enjoy, and serve, and please, and worship,

ship, and obey God as our Church directs us, we need not fear what Men or Devils can do against us, nor concern our selves with what may, or what may not happen hereafter ; but still trust in God, who as he hath delivered us, he will yet deliver us. We have no cause to doubt of his Kindness and Favour to our Church, having had so great, so wonderful Experience of it already.

But for that end, we must be sure to live as in the true Faith and Fear of God, so also in humble Obedience, and Stedfast Loyalty to the Queen. For that is absolutely necessary, not only as a Duty in it self to God, but likewise as a Means for the supporting our Church, by strengthening the Hands of her, whom God is pleased to make the happy Instrument of preserving it to us. And therefore I cannot but admire, with what confidence any can profess any value or kindness for the Church, and yet talk or act Seditiously against the Queen. For, that is to pretend to uphold the Church with one Hand, and to endeavour in good earnest to pluck it down with the other. Be sure, all the real Members of our Church, are as faithful Subjects to the Crown ; neither can they be otherwise. Forasmuch as the Spirit which runs through the whole Body of the *Catholick*, and by consequence

quence our Church, as I have shewn, puts them upon Universal Obedience to all the Commands of God ; and to these amongst the rest, of Honouring the King, and being subject and obedient to the Higher Powers. And hence it is, that as we never heard of any Rebels in the *Primitive Church*, so neither are there, nor can be any such amongst those, who are really of ours ; which is the great Glory of our Church, and a clear demonstration of its Apostolical Constitution, and that, which if duly considered, would make all the Christian Princes in the World, endeavour to reform the Churches Seated in their Dominions, according to her Pattern and Example : And to protect them too, when they are so reform'd ; altho' it was for nothing else, but to keep their Kingdoms quiet, and so make the Government easie to themselves : much more, if they respect their own and their Peoples Souls, that they may be Saved.

But that we may all be so, we must not think it enough to be admitted into the Church, and made visible Members of it. For though all that shall be saved are added to the Church ; yet it doth not follow, that all who are so added to the Church shall be saved. It is true, all such are in a state of Salvation, and in the way to it,
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but except they continue in that state, and walk in that way, they can never attain to the End of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls.

Wherefore, I humbly pray and advise all that desire in good earnest to be Saved, that you would not content you selves with being Members of the Church in general; nor yet with doing only some of those things which she requireth of you; but to use all the Means, and observe the whole Method, which she out of God's Holy Word hath prescribed for that end, otherwise you will certainly deprive your selves of something that would have been very Beneficial, if not Necessary for you; as ye may easily see, if ye will but look back upon that short Scheme which I have now given you of it. As for example, I suppose ye are all Baptiz'd, but are ye Confirm'd too? If ye be not, ye still want one of those Means which the Holy Apostles, and their Successors, in all Ages have used, whereby to obtain the Gifts and Graces of God's Holy Spirit for those who are Baptized. And suppose you are Confirm'd; Do ye also observe the several *Fasts* of the Church? If ye do not, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to keep your Bodies in that due frame and temper, as that they may be fit Temples for the Holy Ghost

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to dwell in. And supposing ye Fast, do ye also pray to Almighty God, both publickly and privately? And do ye perform your publick Devotions to God, in that form, after that manner, and at such times as the Church hath appointed? Do ye hearken to God's Holy Word, as Read and Expounded by her? Do ye receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as oft as she is ready to give it you? If ye neglect all, or or any of these and the like means of Salvation, which are there administred, you had as good be out of the Church as in it, and have no more ground to expect to be Saved, than you have to accomplish any other end without using the Means.

Whereas, do but ye truly and constantly observe all and every one of those Means which our Church, as I have shewn, administred to you, and trust, and depend, as ye ought, upon the Promises of God, for the assistance and co-operation of his Holy Spirit with them; and I dare assure you in the Name, and in the Presence of my great Lord and Master *Jesus Christ*; you shall soon find them, by his Grace and Blessing, effectual to the great ends and purposes for which they are Ordain'd, even to the enlightning of your Minds, to the regulating of your Passions, to the confirming of your Faith, to the mortifying of
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your Lufts, and to the making you real and true Saints, sincerely pious towards God, Loyal to our Sovereign, Just and Charitable towards all Men : By which means ye will be fitted and qualified, not only for the Pardon of your Sins, by the Blood of *Jesus*, but likewise for Heaven and Eternal Glory. So that when ye depart out of this World, ye will be admitted into the blessed Society of the Holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, where you will live with God himself, and laud and magnifie his great and glorious Name, both for his continuing his Church to you, and for his adding you to his Church, that ye might be Saved, by the Merits and Mediation of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* : To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, and Glory, now, and for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON V.

JOHN xii. 20.

*And there were certain Greeks among them,
that came up to worship at Feast.*

WE are here met together at this time to do the Work, the great Work which we were all made for, even to worship him that made us. And therefore, it will be very seasonable to consider what that Work really is, and how it ought to be always done. For I cannot but in Charity believe that they who constantly attend the places of God's Publick Worship, do truly intend and desire to worship God there; and that their Failures in the Performance of it do generally proceed either from Ignorance or Mistake of the Way and Manner how to perform it. For it cannot be easily imagined, that if People did
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rightly understand what it is to worship God, they should ever fancy that coming to Church, and continuing there whilst another prays and preaches, is all the Worship that he that made them requires of them. And yet, to our shame be it spoken, this is all that is done by most of our Congregations instead of *Worshipping God*.

The Truth is, we have, in a great measure, lost the right manner of performing Religious Worship, in a Crowd of Disputes about the Object to which it ought to be perform'd. The *Church of Rome* hath of late degenerated so far from the Doctrine and Practice of the Primitive and Universal Church, that they who live in her Communion do commonly perform the same Acts of Religious Worship to Creatures, which they do to the great Creator of the World, *God Blessed for ever*. This we justly condemn them for, as judging it one of the greatest Sins that a Church or Person can be guilty of. But in the midst of this our just Zeal against the *Papists*, for giving as much Worship to Creatures as they do to the Creator; we must have a care of falling into the other Extream, even of giving no more Worship to our Creator, than what may be given to a Creature; which is the great Fault of too many among us. For the reforming or preventing whereof,
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for the future, it will be necessary to lay aside all Prejudices, and consider impartially, what that is which Almighty God would have us do, when he commands us to *worship* him; or what is the true Notion of *Religious Worship*, properly so called, as it is distinguished from all other Duties which we owe to God, and is commonly expressed in Scripture by the Word προσκυνῆσις, *Adoration*, and so is always distinguished from λατρεία, which signifies the *serving* of God in general, and not only that particular Act whereby we are properly said to *adore* and *worship* him.

This therefore is that, which by his Grace and Assistance I shall endeavour to do, in the Explication of the Words which I have now read; *And there were certain Greeks among them, which came up to worship at the Feast.*

Where by *Greeks* we are to understand such Gentiles, who by conversing with the *Jews*, or else by some other means, had attained to the Knowledge, and embraced the Worship of the true God. These are often mentioned in the *Acts* of the Holy Apostles, where they were called *Devout* or *Religious Greeks* and *Profelytes*, because altho they did not communicate with the *Jews* in their Sacrifices and Offerings, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the *Mosaic*

Law, yet they worshipped the same God as they did.

Of such *Greeks* or *Gentiles* as these were, it is here said, that certain of them were now among the Apostles and Disciples of Christ, and that they *came up to worship at the Feast*. Where there are three things to be observed concerning them ;

- I. The *Place* whither they came, they *came up*.
- II. The *Time* when, at the *Feast*.
- III. The *Business* they came about, *to worship*. They *came up to worship at the Feast*.

First, the *Place*, was *they came up*, that to *Hierusalem*, and to the Temple there ; which being then the only Place upon Earth , dedicated to the Service of the most high God, by his own Appointment, it was, upon that Account, the best and highest Place upon Earth, all other Places being much inferior to it. And therefore whatsoever Country or City these *Greeks* came from, they might be truly said, as they are here, to *come up*, as to an higher Place, when they came to the Temple at *Hierusalem*.

And it is very observable, that these *Greeks* acknowledging the true God, could
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not but know withal, that he being every where present, they might have performed the same Worship to him in any other Place, which they did at *Hierusalem*. And yet, how far soever they dwelt off, they still came thither to do it. And the reason was, because their very going to worship *there*, was a professing their Acknowledgment of the God, which was *there* worshipped. And besides that, they know that God, had promised to meet them, and to bless them in such Places where his Name was recorded, in a more especial manner than in any other place: in that he had said, *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*, *Exod. xx. 24.* From whence they could not but conclude it to be their Interest as well as Duty to go to *Hierusalem* to worship, that being the only place at that time, where God had recorded his Name, and by consequence where he had appointed *to come unto them, and to bless them.*

And certainly this Promise was never intended only for the Old Testament, or the Temple then standing; for it runs in general terms, *In all places where I record my Name.* And he must have very mean thoughts of Christ and his Gospel, who can suffer himself to be persuaded that the

Name of God is not *recorded* in our Christian Churches, as well as it was in the Jewish Tabernacle or Temple. For this is to prefer the Law before the Gospel, and to make the Condition of the Jews much better than that of Christians. Forasmuch as they always had some place or other among them, where God had promised to come unto them, and so to be specially present with them, and to bless them; whereas, according to this opinion, we have none. But he that rightly considers the Nature and Design of the Gospel, must needs acknowledge, that as it excels the Law in many particulars, it comes short of it in none: much less in this which is of so great Importance. But that whatsoever it was whereby the Name of God is said to be *recorded* among the Jews, the same is in as high, if not in a much higher manner, among us at this time, and howsoever it was that God was *specially present* in such places then, without all doubt he is so still.

What it is that constitutes the *Shechinah* or *Special Presence* of God in places that are consecrated to him, and so have his Name recorded in them, it is not necessary for us to determine. I know it hath been the received Opinion of late, that it is the Attendance of the Holy Angels there that doth

doth it, and do not question but they are as certainly present in our Christian Churches, as ever they were in the Temple at *Hierusalem*. For that *St. Paul* himself assures us of. But God is not therefore said to be present in such places, because the Angels are so; but the Angels are therefore present there, because he is so in a more especial manner than elsewhere. And the *Specialty* of his Presence seems rather to consist in those special Discoveries, which he is pleased to make of himself, and those special Blessings and Assistances, which God the Holy Ghost vouchsafeth to his People, in such Places where his Name is recorded. Hence, several of the learned Rabbins, by the *Shechinah*, understand the *Holy Ghost*. But I ground not this Opinion upon any Rabbinical Notions, but upon the Words of *St. Paul*; where he saith, *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* 1 Cor. 3. 16. From whence it is evident, that it is the *Inhabitation of the Spirit*, which makes a Place, a *Temple of God*, a place of *his special Residence*. And therefore as the Spirit is said to dwell in the real Saints, because he actuates, influences, and assists them in what they do; so is he said to dwell in a Church or Temple, because he is there always ready to bestow his special Grace and

Assistance, even all manner of spiritual Blessings upon all such as come thither, rightly disposed to perform their Devotions to him. Which seems also to be the purport of the Promise it self, *in all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*, that is, I will so come unto thee, as to bless thee in a more especial Manner than in any other Place. And then it is no wonder that the Holy Angels, according to the general Sense of Scripture and Antiquity, are always present in such Places, to admire the Goodness of their Lord and Master to his Creatures here below, and to be ready upon all Occasions, to distribute such Blessings, as they are capable of conveying to them. As we see the Story of the Eunuch, Treasurer to *Candace* Queen of the *Æthiopians*; who having been to worship at the Temple, an Angel was presently sent, to order *Philip* to go and meet the said Eunuch, and to bring him into the Church, that he might be saved.

But we need not trouble our selves with such nice Speculation about it. It is sufficient for our present purpose, that the Most High God, according to his own Promise, and the Sense and Experience of his Church in all Ages, is present in all such places where his Name is recorded in a more especial

special and peculiar manner than it is elsewhere. For hence it is, that pious Christians always frequented such places as were dedicated to the Service of God, and so had his Name recorded in them. Hence it was that heretofore they were so zealous and forward to erect and dedicate such places. They needed not in the Primitive times, as we do now, the Edicts of Emperours, or Acts of Parliament for the Building of Churches; their own Piety and Zeal for the Glory of God and the Salvation of Men prompted them sufficiently to it. Hence also it is, that the very setting apart and consecrating of such places for the Service and Worship of God, was always reckoned, and truly is, a very great Act of Religion, in that we thereby demonstrate our acknowledgment of his Power and Sovereignty over us, of his Love and Goodness to us, and likewise of his Right and Propriety in what we have, in that we pay him Tribute and do him Homage for it, by devoting some part of that Land or Estate that he hath given us, unto him of whom we hold the whole. Hence lastly it was, that the *Greeks* in my Text came up to *Hierusalem*, that so they might worship God in his own House, the proper place where his Publick Worship should be performed, and where nothing
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else should be performed, but what hath Relation thereunto. So that the same Acts, which in other places may be Acts only of *civil Respect* to Men, when performed in the Church to God, they become Acts of *Religious Worship* unto him.

The next Thing to be consider'd, is the *Time*, when these *Greeks* came up to Worship, *at the Feast*, that is, the Passover, as the Context sheweth. As if they did not think it enough to worship God at any other *place*, but they came up to the *Temple* to do it *there*; so neither did they think it enough to worship him at any other *time*, but they came up at the *Feast*, to do it *then*. As knowing that *Time* and *Place*, though they be but Circumstances, they are necessary Circumstances of Religious Worship, and therefore appointed by God himself; who commands, that a due Respect shall be given to both; *Ye shall keep my Sabbath, and ye shall reverence my Sanctuary*, Levit. 19. 20. Indeed, take away all Distinction betwixt Holy and Common Times and Places, and what would become of Religion in the World? If no *Places* were set apart where Men should worship God, they would do it *no where*; and, if no *Times*, they would *never* do it. Hence it is that God, and under him the Church, in all Ages hath taken
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special Care, that as some part of the Earth which we live upon, so some part of the Time also that we live in it, should be devoted wholly to him who gives it to us. And they that would keep their Hearts always in an Holy Frame and Temper, must make Conscience of observing such *Times*, as well as *Places*, that are set apart for these Holy Purposes. As the *Greeks* here did, who came up to worship at the Feast.

But that which I chiefly design to speak to, is the *Business* they came about; they came up to *Worship*. To *Worship*? what is that? Did they come to love God, to fear him, to trust on him, or the like? No surely, they did all this at Home; at least they were bound to do it in all Places, and at all Times, as well as at *Hierusalem* upon the Feast Day. And besides, these being Acts purely of the Soul, and so confined within their own Breasts, none could take notice of them, but God and their own Consciences; whereas to all Religious Worship it is plainly necessary, that there be some Overt Act, whereby these inward Motions of the Soul to God may be discovered and represented unto others. But did they come then to hear God's Word? I do not doubt but they had the Law or Prophets read, and perhaps expounded

pounded to them. And so far as that was the Means whereby they learned how to worship God aright, it had some Relation to it. But the Scriptures plainly distinguish betwixt *reading* or *hearing of God's Word*, and *worshipping* of him. For it is written, that *they spent one fourth part of the Day in reading in the Book of the Law; and another fourth part in confessing and worshipping the Lord their God*, Neh. 9. 3. From whence it appears, that these were two several Duties, perform'd at several times of the Day.

But what then did they come to do? Did they come to pray, or to praise God? Questionless they did. The Place they came to, was called the *House of Prayer*; that being the great Work it was design'd for. Neither can it be deny'd, but there are such Acts, without which it is impossible to worship God aright. But yet in the place last mention'd, although they *confessed* (under which is comprehended both Prayer and Praise) and *worshipped* both at the same time; yet these are reckon'd as two distinct Duties. And indeed, the *worshipping of God*, properly so called, doth not consist so much in these Acts themselves, as in the Way and Manner of performing them,

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But then the Question is, how this must be done? After what manner these *Greeks* did it; and we ought to carry our selves in all our Addresses to the most High God? so as that we may be properly said to *worship him*? Which being a Question that concerns Almighty God himself, and his Worship and Honour, I shall not undertake to resolve it by my own Reason or Judgment, but shall consult his Holy Oracles, where we have many Things which singly, much more jointly considered, will fully discover his Will and Pleasure to us in this Particular. First therefore we may observe, that the Holy Ghost never useth any Word whereby to express that *Worship* which is due to God; but what signifies such humble Gestures of our Bodies before him, which may express our Awe and Fear of him. There are but two Words that I know of in all the *Hebrew* Tongue, that are used to denote the *Worship* of the True God, or are ever so translated into other Languages; and they are כָּנָה and הִשְׁתַּחוּת whereof the first signifies, *Falling down* in general; the other, *Bowing* or *Prostrating our selves before him*; and so they are commonly translated, as well as by *worshipping*. The same may be said of the *Greek* Word προσκυνέω, so often used in the New Testament, and particularly in
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my Text. From whence we may clearly see, what the Holy Ghost means by *worshipping God*. For how can we know his Mind better, than by the Words whereby he declareth it? But he always expresseth *the Worship of God*, by such Words as signifie our *Bowing or Prostrating our selves* before him. And therefore we may certainly conclude, it is his Mind and Pleasure, that we should always perform our Worship to God by such humble Gestures as these are.

In the next place we may observe, that the most High God doth expressly forbid us to *bow down* to any Image or Idol, as in the second Commandment; *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Waters under the Earth: Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them*. But why should he forbid us to do this to an Image or Idol, if it be not an essential part of that Worship which is due to himself? Or what can be more plain, than that he commands us to bow down to himself, in that he forbids our doing it to any thing else instead of himself? And besides, it is acknowledged by all, that he who *bows to an Idol*, is, by vertue of this Commandment, guilty of *Idolatry*, in that he worships that Idol,
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which could not be, unless *Bowing* itself be an Act of *Religious Worship* due to the true God.

Moreover we may observe, that the Holy Ghost, that we might not be mistaken in a Matter of so great Importance, doth often explain himself what he means by worshipping God: As *David* inspired by him, cries out, *Oh come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Psal. 95. 6. Where *Bowing* and *Kneeling* are plainly added to express the several Postures to be used when we *worship*. So also, where he tells us, how the Saints of Old were wont to *worship* God.

As for Example, when *Abraham's* Servant perceived that God had prospered his Journey, it is said, *And the Man bowed down his Head, and worshipped the Lord*, Gen. 24. 26. When the Children of *Israel* understood God's Purpose to deliver them out of *Egypt*, then *they bowed down their Heads and worshipped*, Exod. 4. 31. When God appeared to *Moses*, and proclaimed his Glory, it is said, *And Moses made haste and bowed his Head towards the Earth, and worshipped*, Exod. 34. 8. When *Job* had heard the several Messages that were brought him, concerning God's dealing with him, it is said, *Then Job arose, rent his Mantle, and shaved his Head, and fell down upon the Ground*
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and worshipped, Job 1. 20. But the Scripture is so full of such Expressions, that it would be tedious to repeat all the Places where they occur; but I cannot omit that, where it is said, Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the People answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their Hands, and they bowed down their Heads, and worshipped the Lord with their Faces to the Ground, Neh. 8. 6. From whence it is as plain as Words can make it, that this was the ancient way of worshipping God.

But some perhaps may say, that these Instances are only out of the Old Testament, and therefore may not concern us now. To which I answer, That most of them were before the Levitical Law was made, neither was this ever commanded in that Law which was to expire with Christ, but is grounded upon the Law of Nature, and inserted into the Body of the Moral Law, as I observed before. Howsoever, to put the Matter out of doubt, we have as pregnant Instances of it in the New Testament, as in the Old. For the Wise Men that came from the East, when they had found out our Lord, *they fell down and worshipped him, Mat. 2. 11.* When Satan had shewed our Saviour all the Kingdoms of the World, and tempted him, saying, *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down*

down and worship me. Our Lord answered *Get thee hence Satan, it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* Matt. 4. 9, 10. Where it is manifest, that our Saviour by *Worship*, means that kind of Worship which the Devil would have had performed to him, even by *falling down before him.*

Thus it was that our Lord himself was often *worshipped*, as we read in the Holy Gospels. For S. *Matthew* saith, that a *certain Leper came to him and worshipped him,* Matt. 8. 2. And how he did it, St. *Mark* acquaints us, saying, that *he kneeled down to him,* Mark 1. 40. From whence it appears, that *kneeling down and worshipping*, in the Sense of the Evangelists, is one and the same thing. So also St. *Matthew* again saith, that *Jairus worshipped our Lord,* Matt. 9. 18. St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* say, that *he fell down at Jesus Feet,* Mark 5. 22. Luke 8. 41.

And indeed it was after the same manner that Christ himself worshipped in the Garden. For St. *Luke* saith, that *he kneeled down and prayed,* Luke 24. 41. St. *Matthew*, that *he fell on his Face,* Matt. 26. 39. St. *Mark*, that *he fell on the Ground and prayed,* Mark 14. 35. Which shews that he used all these several Postures in the worshipping of his Father. Nay, it is much to be observed,
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that the last Act that our Saviour did before his Death upon the Cross, was an Act of Worship in this Sense. For St. John saith, *that he bowed down his Head and gave up the Ghost*, John 19. 30. And seeing our Blessed Lord, both in his Life, and at the very Point of Death *worshipped* after this manner, it cannot be imagined but that his Apostles did so too. And therefore we find St. Paul *kneeling* at his Prayers upon the Sea-shore, *Act. 21. 5.* And St. Stephen, when the Stones were flying about his Ears, *Act. 7. 60.* Which certainly he would not have done at such a time, if it had been a mere Ceremony, and not a necessary part of Religious Worship.

Hence, when *Cornelius* supposing St. Peter to be more than a Man, *fell down at his Feet to worship him.* St. Peter took him up, saying, *stand up, I myself also am a Man,* *Act. 10. 26.* As if he should have said, this is the Worship which is due to God, and therefore not to be performed after this manner to me, who am only a Man. So also when S. John, supposing the Angel that spake to him to be Christ himself, *fell down at his Feet to worship him,* the Angel forbad him, saying, *See thou do it not, for I am thy Fellow-Servant, worship God,* *Apoc. 19. 10. c. 22. 9. i. e.* worship God, and him only after this manner, as thou wouldst have worshipped

shipped me, even by falling down before him.

But we need no other Arguments to prove that this was the Notion which the Apostles had of Religious Worship, than the Testimony of St. Paul, which makes it clear and undeniable. For he, speaking of Christian Assemblies, and of Praying and Propheying there in a known Tongue, saith, that *if one come among them and hears them propheying in a known Tongue, the Secrets of his Heart will be made manifest, and so falling down on his Face, he will worship God*, 1 Cor. 14. 24. For how was it possible for the Apostle to declare his Sense of Religious Worship more fully and clearly than he hath done in these Words? Which so plainly teach us, that he who would worship God aright, must fall down, or use some such Reverential Posture before him.

Having thus discovered the Mind of the Holy Ghost in Scripture, concerning the way and manner of *Worshipping God*, I might now proceed to shew, that this is not my own private Opinion, nor the judgment of our own, or any other particular Church only; but that it hath been the Sense of the *Catholick Church*, in all Places and Ages since the Apostles times, and that her Practice hath always been accordingly. But we need not appeal to

the Practice of the *Church Militant*, having the Example of the *Church Triumphant* it self for it. For in the Visions which Saint *John* had of what is done in Heaven, we read, that *The twenty four Elders fall down before him that sits on the Throne, and Worship him that liveth for ever, and ever, Apoc. 4. 10.* And that all the Angels stood round about the Throne, and fell before the Throne on their Faces, and Worshipped God, Chap. 7. 11. And so frequently elsewhere. And if those pure and spotless Creatures, the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect, and the holy Angels themselves, Worship the most High God with so much Reverence and Humility; what cause have we poor Mortals upon Earth to do so? Especially, considering, that we hope e'er long to be admitted into their Society, and to do as they do for ever. And therefore, we had need to imitate them as well as we can beforehand; that so when we come amongst them, we may not think it any new or strange thing, much less Superstition, as some do. For they who go out of this World, with their Minds possessed with an Opinion, that to Bow, or Cringe (as they profanely call it, in derision) before Almighty God, is Superstition, are very unfit to go to Heaven; nay, their very Consciences would not suffer them to go thither, if they might,
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for fear of being guilty of Superstition; if they should conform to the Discipline and Orders of the Church that is there Established. But let them Indulge such foolish and profane Conceits, if they please, and see what will be the issue of it, at long run. Let us, who hope to go to Heaven, begin to Worship God here, as we hope to do it there for ever: even by using all such humble and awful Gestures before him, which may testify our Acknowledgment of his Presence with us, of his Greatness and Sovereignty over us, and of his Goodness and Mercy to us.

He that impartially considers the Premises, so plainly laid down in the Holy Scriptures, cannot but from thence conclude, that to the right performance of that Duty which is properly called *the Worship of God*; it is necessary that we *Bow the Head*, or *Knee*, or *whole Body*, or use some such *outward sign and expression of Fear and Reverence before him*. And that as such Gestures when used to a Prince, or Parent upon Earth, are a Sign of that civil Respect which is due unto them from their Subjects or Children; so the same, when done to the Creator of the World, are really Acts of that Religious Worship which is due from his Creatures to him.

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But, after all, I must observe unto you, there is one thing still behind, without which, all this will signifie nothing. That ye may the better understand what this is, I desire you to call to Mind our Saviour's words, *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth,* Joh. 4. 24. I know these words have been produced of late, to prove that no External Worship is now required of us, and that several learned Men have taken off the Argument several ways. But, I cannot but admire, how it first came into any Man's Thoughts to imagine, that our Saviour should here condemn External Worship. He saith, indeed, that we must *worship God in the Spirit*; but doth it follow therefore, that we must not Worship him in the Body too? Did not he himself perform External Worship unto God? Did not he bow his Head, his Knees; yea, his his whole Body before him, when he Prayed to him? Did not his Apostles and Disciples do so too; as I have shewed before? How then can it be imagined, that he should condemn that which he himself practised, and taught others also to do?

But it is plain, that our Saviour is so far from speaking against External Worship in these words, that he only Teacheth us how to perform it aright. *God, saith he, is a Spirit;*

Spirit, and therefore they that *worship him*, must not put him off, as the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, of whom he there speaks, were wont to do, with *Bodily worship only*, but they must *worship him in Spirit* too, and by consequence *in Truth*; that being the only *true Worship* which is thus perform'd by the whole Man, by the Body and Spirit both, unto him that made them both. So that this seems to be the same in effect with that Expression of *David*, *In thy fear will I worship towards thy Holy Temple*, Psal. 5. 7. that is, I will not only bow my Head or Body, directing my self, at the same time, towards thy Holy Temple, but I will do it in the fear and dread of thy Divine Majesty; which also is implied in the very notion of Worship. For that being only a Sign or Expression of our Sense and Fear of God; if the Spirit be not at the same time possessed with such a sense and fear of God, there cannot be any real Sign or Expression of it; and therefore no true Worship. So that to our worshipping of God in Truth, it is absolutely necessary, that the several Motions of our Bodies before him, proceed from, and be attended with suitable Motions of the Soul and Spirit towards him.

And thus indeed it was, that Pious and Devout Persons, have been always wont to

Worship God. I could give you many Instances of it, both in the *Old* and *New Testament*. To pass by others, I before observ'd, how *Job*, understanding God's Pleasure towards him, fell down upon the Ground and worshipped before him; but did not he worship in his Soul as well as Body? Yes, surely, for as he lay thus Prostrate before God, he said, *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and Naked shall I return thither, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord*, Job. 1. 21. From whence it is plain, that the Prostration of his Body before God, was attended with an equal Submission of his Spirit to him. Thus our Lord describes two Men going up to the Temple to Pray, the one a *Pharisee*, the other a *Publican*; the *Pharisee*, saith he, *stood and Prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee, that I am not as other Men, &c.* from whence we may observe, that he used no Reverence at all, but talked proudly and malapertly to Almighty God; and therefore our Saviour doth not say, that he Prayed to God but that he Prayed *with himself*, or as it is in the *Greek*, *ὑπὸς αὐτὸν*, he Prayed to himself; but the *Publican* standing afar off, and signifying thereby his Unworthiness to approach to God, *would not lift up so much as his Eyes to Heaven*, but fixing them upon the Earth, which he could not do with-

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out bowing down his Head, in this humble worshipping Posture, *He smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner,* Luk. 11. 13. which shews, that as his outward Carriage before God, was Humble and Reverent, so was his Spirit too. And therefore our Saviour saith, that *this Man went to his House Justified rather than the other,* that is, this Man's Prayer and Worship was accepted, the other's not.

Thus also it was, that our Lord himself Worshipped God, in Spirit and in Truth, according to his own words. For at the same time that his Body lay Prostrate before his Father in the Garden, his Soul was submitting it self to him, *Father, saith he, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; Nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done,* Matth. 26. 39. So he did too, when he was upon the Cross; for St. John, as I observed, saith, *he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost.* And St. Luke saith, that *he cryed with a loud Voice, saying, Father into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, and having said thus, he gave up the Ghost,* Luk. 23. 46. From whence it is evident, that at the same time that he bowed his Head, he likewise commended his Spirit into the Hands of God, and so worshipped him, both in Body and Spirit too.

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Thus also it is that the glorified Saints and Angels in Heaven are represented to us as worshipping God there: For as they fall down before him, so at the same time they cry out, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created*, Apoc. 4. 11. And elsewhere, having declar'd God's Goodness to his Church, in delivering Her from Her Enemies, they fell down and worshipped, saying, *Amen, Alleluja*, c. 19. 4. And this certainly is to worship God in Spirit and Truth, when the Soul at the same time is so inflamed with Love unto him, and so full of the Sense of his Goodness and Power, that it breaks forth into Praises and Allelujahs to him.

Thus lastly it is, that the Catholick Church upon Earth hath always observed this Rule of our Blessed Saviour. But I shall instance only in the Greek and Syriack Churches. In the Greek, they have their ordinary *Bowings*, which they properly call *προσκυνηματα* *Worshippings*; and their Extraordinary, which they call *μετανοιας*, which are of two Sorts, the *lesser* and the *greater*; the *lesser* are, when they bow their Heads only to the Ground; the *greater*, when they lie prostrate upon it. Now, whensoever they perform any such

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External Worship with their Bodies, their Souls, or Spirits, are likewise employed in it. For we find in their Publick Service, that when they make their three Ordinary Bows, they often say the *τρισαλιον*, and bow at each part of it; "Αγιος, ο δεος, "Αγιος ιquez, "Αγιος αθανατος, ελεησον ημας, *Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal God, have Mercy upon us.* When they come first into the Chancel or Chaire, and make their three Bows towards the East, they repeat the Words of the Publican, *God be merciful to me a Sinner.* Afterwards when they Bow, they sometimes use the Words of the Psalmist, *I will love thee, O Lord my Strength, the Lord is my Support, and my Refuge.* Sometimes they say, *Lord open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.* Sometimes the *Gloria Patri*; which is never said without worshipping the most Blessed Trinity, that is glorified in it, And as for the *Syriack Church*, there is a Liturgy used in *Syria, Chaldaea*, and all the Places thereabouts, which is all in the *Syriack Tongue*, except the Rubricks, which are *Arabick*; in this I find, that the Priest, when he goes to the Altar, make shis Bow, and saith, *I am come into thy House, O God, and worship before thy Throne, O King of Heaven forgive me all*
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that I have sinned against thee, Litur. Syr.
p. 2.

And this, as might be easily shewn, hath been the constant Practice and Custom of the Church in all Ages and Places. So that as Christians durst never, till our Days, pray to Almighty God, without either kneeling or bowing, or using some Posture of Adoration before him, so they never used any such Posture, but they still lift up their Hearts and Spirits to him. And this was always reputed the *true worshipping* of God; or, as our Saviour words it, the *worshipping of him in Spirit and in Truth*. For as where the Apostle saith, that he *will sing with the Spirit*, and he *will sing with the Understanding also*, 1 Cor. 14. 15: and that we should *sing and make Melody in our Hearts to the Lord*, Eph. 5. 19. He doth not thereby forbid the Use of our Voices in singing (without which there cannot be properly any singing at all,) but only requires, that our Hearts should go along with them. So when our Saviour saith that we should *worship in the Spirit*; he doth not thereby forbid the using of any Bodily Gestures (without which there cannot be properly any worshipping at all) but only requires that our Spirits go along with our Bodies

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dies in the Performance of it. For as no Man can be said to worship God at all, that doth not worship him with his Body, so no Man can be said to worship him in Truth, that doth not worship in his Spirit also.

Now these Things being thus laid down, it is easie to determine what the *Greeks* in my Text did, when *they came up to worship at the Feast*. For we cannot but suppose they did the Work they came about, that is, they went to the Temple, the House of the most High God, and there believing and apprehending him to be, according to his Promise, specially present, they bowed their Heads, or prostrated themselves upon their Knees or Faces before him, and in this humble Posture they confessed their Sins, and implor'd his Mercy in the Pardon of them, and his Grace to forsake them; acknowledging him to be the Almighty Creator and Governour of the World, and that they had nothing but what they received from his Bounty and Goodness; or something to that Purpose. For this was properly to worship God, according to the true Sense of the Word, as used in Scripture, and interpreted by the Practice of the Universal Church.

Thus I have endeavour'd to explain the ancient and true Notion of *Religious Worship*;

ship; which, if seriously consider'd, would contribute very much, as to the Advancement of God's Glory, so likewise to the Settlement of his Church among us; and to the defending of it against its Adversaries on both Sides. For as for the Sectaries, who inveigh so much against these solemn Gestures prescribed by our Church to be observed in the Worship of God, they must needs be convinced of their Error, when they consider, that such Gestures are necessary to be observed in the worshipping of God, whether they were ever prescribed by any Church, or no: and that whensoever they condemn us for the using of them, they do with the same Breath condemn the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, the whole Catholick Church, both Militant and Triumphant; yea, and Christ himself the Head of it, who used them as well as we.

And as for the Papists, from this Catholick Notion of Religious Worship, it is easie to observe, that they have little or nothing of it among them. Forasmuch as all their Publick Services being perform'd in a Language the People do not understand, whatsoever outward Gestures they use, it is impossible they should worship God together in Spirit, as they ought to do.

do. And besides, although they often bow or kneel, it is usually to some Image or Picture, and so they worship that instead of God, directly contrary to his Commandment. I know the Learned among them pretend, that although they bow to Images, they do not intend to worship them, but God only: But they may pretend what they please, I am sure God himself doth not speak one Word of directing their Intentions one way or other, but only of bowing to Images, *Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them*; and therefore if they do that, be their Intentions what they will, be sure they do that which he hath plainly forbidden.

But what doth the Apostle say, *Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege*, Rom. 2. 22. We who abhor the worshipping of Images and Idols, shall we rob God of the Worship that is due to him? God forbid. If Bowing be no Act of Religious Worship, why do we blame others for giving it to Images? If it be, why do we not give it to Almighty God? And yet of all the Duties required in our Holy Religion, what is more commonly neglected by some, and derided by others, than this is? Which plainly shews, that for all the great Talk they make of Religion, it is but Talk; they are not in good earnest about

about it, nor have that Sense of God upon their Mind, which is the Ground and Foundation of it. For if they had, it would be impossible for them not to express it all the ways they can, especially this way, which is so natural, that they who do not express their Sense of God by it, have just Cause to suspect, that they have none at all to express.

For, as for instance, we are now in the special Presence of that Supreme and All-glorious Being, which we call God, and we shall presently make our solemn Addresses again to him. Now let any one but consider who it is before whom he is, and to whom he then speaks, how pure, how holy, how great, how mighty, how infinite he is in all Perfection ; and withal, let him by Faith, as it is the Evidence of Things not seen, behold and apprehend this Almighty Being, as specially present, according to his Word. Let any Man, I say, that hath any Fear of God upon his Heart but do this, and then let him forbear to manifest it in his outward Behaviour if he can: For my part, I think it to be impossible. Especially considering, that as God hath promised, that where his Name is recorded, he will come unto us and bless us: So our Bless'd Saviour hath said, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there*

there am I in the midst of them, Matt. 18. 20. From whence I cannot but believe, that he is as really in the midst of us at this time, as that we our selves are here. But is Christ, whom the Angels themselves worship, is he in the midst of us, and we not worship him? Is it possible for us firmly to believe, and clearly to apprehend the Eternal God our Saviour to be here present, and yet express no Reverence or Respect to him, neither when we come into his Presence, nor when we go out of it, nor while we are in it, and hear his blessed Name mentioned to put us in mind of it? No, nor when we take the Boldness to speak unto him neither? Surely it cannot be. For such a Faith and Sense as this, would naturally operate so much upon our Minds, that we could not chuse but fall upon our Knees, or bow down before him, and so worship him both in Soul and Body too.

This therefore being the most ancient, the most proper, and as I may truly say, the most natural way of worshipping God, who can but wish it was revived and universally received among us? Of what mighty Advantage would it be, both to our selves, to the whole Church, and Kingdom also? For by this means we should effectually obtain whatsoever good Things we

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thus humbly desire at the Hands of God, as the Fathers have frequently observed. By this means also we should very much excite both our own and each others Affections towards God, when we meet to perform our Devotions to him. For it is *S. Augustine's* Observation, that as all such Motions of the Body, whereby we worship God, proceed from the inward Affections of our Souls to him, so those inward Affections themselves are increased by such Motions. (*Aug. de curâ pro mort. c. 5.*) And none of us but may observe the same from our own Experience, that the more humble and devout we are in worshipping God, the more are our own Affections raised, and our Souls inflamed towards him. How much more, when we see all about us, testifying their Acknowledgment of God's Greatness, Power and Sovereignty over them, in the same reverent and solemn manner that we our selves do it?

Moreover this would be the most effectual way whereby to lay that Spirit of Schism and Sedition, of Profaneness and Irreligion which is gone out among us. For by this means God himself would delight to dwell amongst us, and then that wicked, that turbulent, and seditious Spirit would soon flee from us? And by this Means also Mens Minds would be so over-
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aw'd with the Fear of God, and fortified with such strong and lively Apprehensions of him, that they could never be prevailed upon, either to leave or divide that Church, wherein they are taught and required to worship God so purely and devoutly as they are in ours.

Neither would this conduce only to the Peace and Quiet of the Church, but of the Kingdom too. For this would keep up a Sense of Religion among us: And then as Men would fear God, they would honour the Queen too. But so long as People express no Reverence to the God of Heaven, how can it be expected they should shew any to their Superiors upon Earth? And therefore it is very observable, that one of the first Steps the Devil made, in order to the disposing Mens Minds for the late horrid Rebellion, was, to take them off from bowing, or kneeling, or using any external Reverence in their Prayers to God, as well knowing, that when that was once done, they would soon cast off all Sense of their Duty and Allegiance to the King; as we afterwards found they did by woful Experience. Whereas they who constantly worship God aright, according to the Rules and Orders of our Church, by their frequent and humble Addresses to him, have their Minds continually possessed with such an

Awe and Dread of his Greatness and Power, that they dare not for their Lives oppose it in those to whom he hath committed any part of it, and so hath made them his Vicegerents upon Earth.

But I must remember that we come not hither only to hear, but to do what we have now heard, that is, to worship God, and that we are to do it now at his Holy Table: Wherefore that I may detain you no longer from it, I shall say no more, but only add, that could we be all persuaded constantly to perform this great Duty, with that Humility and Submission, both of Mind and Body that we ought, as we should always live in the true Fear of God, while we are upon Earth. So we should be always ready and prepared to go to Heaven, where we hope to do that to all Eternity, which we have now been speaking of, even worship and adore the Almighty Creator of the World, in and through his Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour and Worship given of us, and of all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth, from this time forth for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON VI.

2 TIM. i. 13.

Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.

Although we are apt to wonder most at such things as seldom happen in the World, yet certainly the most common and obvious things that be, if duly consider'd, deserve as much, if not much more, to be admired by us. What more common to all Mankind, and yet what more strange and wonderful, than that by certain Sounds in the Air, or by certain Characters upon solid Bodies, we should be able to discover what one another thinks. Thoughts we know are the immanent Acts of the Soul, a Spiritual Being, and so not capable of any external Representations. And yet for all that, we can make such Sounds and Figures,

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gures, utter such Words, and write such Letters, from whence other Persons may understand what we think as well as we our selves. And this indeed is the Foundation of all humane Society and Conversation. For by this means we can communicate our Hopes and Fears, our Joys and Grievs, our Desires and Abhorrences, all our Sentiments and Notions to one another. Yea, by this means we can converse with the Antients, and know what they thought, that lived above a Thousand years ago. Of so great use are words, whether spoken or written, to Mankind.

And yet as nothing may be more easily, so nothing hath been more grossly abused then they. For though we can frame Ideas and Notions of things in our Minds, without any relation unto or dependance upon Words, yet having been all along accustomed to express our Thoughts by them, we are apt to be more intent upon Words, than we are upon Things themselves ; and so to accommodate and suit our Notions to Words, rather than Words unto our Notions. So that whatsoever Words we commonly use, whereby to express such or such Things, our Apprehensions of these things are according to the Words whereby we are wont to express them.

them. If they be false, our Apprehensions being regulated by them, cannot possibly be true: and if they be true and rightly understood by us, our Apprehensions cannot possibly be false; being bound up, as it were, and confined within the Sense and Meaning of such Words. But it being very hard and difficult to find out fit and proper Words in any Language, whereby fully and distinctly to express the Nature of Things, and our own Idea's of them, most Men to save themselves the labour of a further Search, take up with the first they meet with, especially if they be but generally receiv'd; which if they happen to be false, as they frequently are, they infallibly lead them into false Conceptions, and erroneous Opinions of the things themselves. And therefore it cannot but highly concern us all, to be very cautious and wary in the Choice of our Words, especially in Divinity, where every Mistake is Dangerous, and many Damnable.

This therefore being a Matter of so great importance, much greater than it is commonly thought of, it may justly challenge to be the Subject of our present Discourse. For which end I have chosen these words of St. Paul to Timothy, *Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast*

hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.

Where we may observe Three Things :

First, That some time before the Writing of this Epistle, St. Paul had given to Timothy a form of sound Words, though not in Writing, yet by word of Mouth. This is plain, in that he saith, *A Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me.* Timothy was now Ordained Bishop of Ephesus, the Metropolis of all *Asia Proconsularis*, whither the Apostle sent him to preach and propagate the Gospel; and that he might rightly understand the Principles of that Religion, which he was to preach, and cause others to do so too, the Apostle put words into his Mouth, such as would clearly and properly express the great Truths, which he was mostly to insist upon, which he therefore calls *ὑγιαίνοντες λόγους*, sound Words, such as would make his Hearers to be *Sana mentis*, Men of sound Judgment and right Notions in the Mysteries of Religion. And whosoever doth not consent to those sound and wholesome Words, the same Apostle elsewhere saith, *That such a one is a Fool, knowing nothing, ἀλλὰ νοσῶν*, but he is sick, as the word signifies, or as our Translation hath

hath it, *he dotes about Questions and strifes of Words, 1 Tim. 6. 4.* As if a Malignant Fever had affected his Brain, distracted his Mind, and made him delirious, so as to rave and talk Nonsense. For so all do that use any other than right and proper Words in the Mysteries of our Religion, whatsoever they say is Nonsense, if not downright Blasphemy. Hence it is that the Apostle so often makes mention of sound Doctrine, in opposition to the extravagant and corrupt Opinions, which false Teachers, even in those Days, instilled into the Minds of their Ignorant and unwary Disciples. And lest *Timothy*, thro' any mistake or inadvertency, should fall himself, or lead others into the same Errors, *St. Paul*, before he sent him to preach the Gospel, furnished him with such a Form of sound Words, which if he did but constantly observe, he could neither be deceived nor deceive.

Secondly, We may observe that this Form of sound Words was both in *Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus* : that is both concerning the Doctrine and the Discipline, what we are to believe, and what to do, in Obedience to the Gospel of Christ. For as Faith comprehends the one, so doth Love the other. And *St. Paul* had given *Timothy* a Form of sound Words

Words in both. But, first in Faith, and then in Love; because it is Faith that works by Love; and he that doth not rightly believe, can never truly obey the Gospel of Christ as he ought to do. But in one, as well as the other, *St. Paul* instructed *Timothy* how to express himself, and by what means hath admonished us also to be very careful how to speak, what words we use, whether in Theoretical or Practical Divinity, concerning either Faith or Manners.

Lastly, *St. Paul* did not think it enough, to give *Timothy* a Form of sound words, but he chargeth him to hold it fast, to keep it, to use no other words, but such as exactly agreed with those which he had taught him. The Greek words are ὑποτάσσων ἐκ τῶν ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων, where the word ὑποτάσσων is variously rendred by Interpreters. I shall not trouble you with any critical Observations about it. But only observe in general, that it is sometimes used for a Pattern or Example, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. sometimes for a short Description, or Delineation, or Summary, or Compendium. Thus *Clement Alexandrinus* wrote a Book, which he called, ὑποτάσσεις, which *Photius* saith, was a brief Exposition of the Old and New Testament; out of which the *Ἐπιτομή ἐκ τῶν Θεοδωτέων* at the end of his works,

works, I suppose were taken. And in this Sense, the word here used, intimates, as if St. *Paul* had given *Timothy*, if not that which we call the *Apostles Creed*, yet some such like Form of sound Words, containing the Sum and Substance of what he was to Believe and Preach.

But the Apostle lays no great stress upon that word. For it follows, hold fast the Form of sound words, *ὧν παρ' ἐμὲ ἤκουσας*, *ὧν* not *ἡς*, which Words, not which Form thou hast heard of me. So that it is not so much the Form, as the Words themselves, which the Apostle would have him to hold fast, to have them continually in his Mind, and in his Mouth too, whensoever he speaks of those Divine Truths, which are revealed to us in the Gospel.

What these sound Words were which *Timothy* heard of St. *Paul*, we know not: But this we know, that it doth as much concern us to use sound words in matters of Divinity, as it did him. And therefore having not heard them at St. *Paul's* own Mouth, as he did, it may not be amiss, if we consider of the most certain way to find them out, that we may consider how to express our selves in all the Articles of our Christian Faith, by such words as the Apostle here calls sound and wholesome, such as will give us and those we speak to, occasion to frame
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right Notions and Conception of those things which belong to our Everlasting Peace.

For this End therefore, I shall in the first place lay down this as a most certain and undeniable Truth, that the Scriptures, as being indited by the Spirit of God, in the Languages wherein they were first written, do contain the best and soundest Words that possibly could be Invented, whereby to express such Truths, which is is necessary for Mankind to believe or know. For they being design'd on purpose to be the Rule, both of our Faith and Manners, and contriv'd for that end, by infinite Wisdom and Goodness it self; it cannot be imagined, but that every thing is there express'd, in the most plain and perspicuous, the most fit and proper, the most full and significant Words, that could be desired of Almighty God, whereby to discover Himself and his Will to our capacities: To which of his infinite Mercy, he is pleased to condescend, in all these Books which are acknowledged by all Christians to be written by Men inspired, moved, assisted and directed in what they wrote, by the Spirit of God himself. By which means, the whole Scripture is indeed, but as one continued *Form of sound Words*; which if we do but *Hold fast* and understand aright

aright, we can neither fall, either into *Hereſie* or *Schiſm*. And whatſoever words we uſe in the Myſteries of our Religion, are either true or falſe, ſound or corrupt, as they do, or do not agree with thoſe which are uſed in that Holy Writ.

But in the next place, we muſt conſider withal, that notwithstanding the extraordinary clearneſs and propriety of Speech, whereby Divine Truths are there revealed to us, yet there never was any *Error*, *Hereſie* or *Schiſm* in the Church, but what was pretended by the Authors and Abettors of it, to be grounded upon Scripture. In this, all Heretick, *Greek* and *Latin*, Old and New agree. They all plead Scripture for what they ſay; and each one pretends that his Opinion, be it never ſo abſurd and ridiculous, is conſonant to the words there uſed. Which though it may ſeem ſtrange at firſt ſight; we ſhall not much wonder at, if we do but conſider three things.

Fiſt, that moſt Men, not underſtanding the Original Languages, read and conſult the Scriptures no otherwiſe than in ſome Tranſlation, which they notwithstanding, look upon as the Word of God; and if there be any word in that Tranſlation, that favours any Erroneous Opinion, they preſently conclude, that the Scriptures
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do so too, tho' they be as much against it, as that Translation is for it. As for Example, in the first Promulgation of the Gospel to Mankind; God said to the Serpent that beguiled our first Parents, *And I will enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy seed and her seed, whereof it is, It, that is the Seed of the Woman, which is Christ, shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel;* as our Translation rightly expounds it. But the vulgar Latin renders it, *Ipsa conteret caput tuum*, as if a Woman should do it; which the Papists interpreting of the Virgin Mary, ascribe to her this Great Victory, and Triumph over Sin and Satan; and are taught to say in their Addresses to her, *Adoro & benedico sanctissimos pedes tuos, quibus antiqui serpentis caput calcasti.* There are many other absurd Opinions as well as Practices in that Church, which this one word hath been the Occasion of it.

Thus, where the Apostle speaking of Marriage, saith, *to usque in Christum per sacramentum*, the vulgar Latin again translates it, *Sacramentum hoc magnum est.* From whence they conclude Matrimony to be a Sacrament, such a one as Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

Thus, also immediately before his Ascension, our Blessed Lord said to his Apostles,

stles, Πορευθέντες ἐν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς, which the vulgar *Latin* renders, *Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos.* Which most of our Modern *European* Versions follow. And from hence I verily believe the Error of the Anabaptists, and Antipedobaptists took its first Rise. For apprehending our Saviour to say according to this Translation, *Go ye and teach all Nations, and then baptize them:* They presently inferr'd, that Persons ought first to be taught, and then baptized: And by Consequence, that Children being not capable of the former, cannot be so of the latter. But if they had understood and consulted the Original, they would have found no such thing. For μαθητεύω never signifies to Teach, but only to make a Disciple. And so the *Syriack* and other Oriental Translations constantly render the Word. And therefore it is observable, that in all the Eastern Churches, this Heresie was never heard of, nor any where else, but only in such places where the *Vulgar Latin* prevail'd; which plainly shews that it was grounded at first, only upon that false Translation of the Word μαθητεύσατε, by *Docere.* Tho' afterwards they endeavour'd to prove it from other places of Scripture, either translated, or at least falsely understood, as this
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is. Many Instances of this Nature might be produced to shew how false Translations of the Scriptures have given the first Occasion to draw such Opinions from them, which are directly contrary to what is asserted in them. And when Men have once espoused an Opinion, whether it be true or false, they look upon themselves as obliged to maintain it.

Secondly, Although there be many, especially of late Years, who are able to read and understand much of the Original Text, yet they also are to seek for the true meaning of many Places. For besides the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, many other Words and Phrases frequently occur, which cannot be fully understood, except we first know the Rites and Customs of the Jewish Church, consider the Context and Scope of the places where such Words are used, compare one place with another, and observe many other Rules requisite to the right Interpretation of those Holy Oracles: which most Men, by reason of their Ignorance and Sloth, are either unable, or unwilling to do. And therefore are apt to take up with the first Sense that offers itself, without giving themselves the trouble of a farther Search.

Thus *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes of the Hereticks in his Days, that they would
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quote Scripture indeed, but not in the Sense which the Context required, but would take here and there a Word, and apply it to their own private Opinions, not considering what is signified by it, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ ψιλῇ ἀποχρώμενοι τῇ λέξει, but abusing the naked Word itself, by putting what Sense they please upon it. The same may be observed of many in our Days, who getting a Scripture Word by the end, away they run with it, and never leave it, till they have forced some Erroneous Opinion or other from it; which therefore cannot be imputed to any Obscurity or Uncertainty in the Scriptures themselves, but to the Darkness of Mens Minds, and the Perverseness of their Wills, that they either cannot, or will not take the pains to understand what is clearly revealed in them. And to this Head most of the Ancient and Modern Heresies may be referred.

Lastly, Although some do understand the Words whereby it hath pleased Almighty God to reveal himself and his Pleasure to us; yet the Things themselves signified by those Words, are many of them so High, Mysterious and Divine, that their finite and corrupt Apprehensions are not able to reach them. And therefore disdaining to believe what they

not comprehend, they detort those Words from their True and proper, to such a Sense as will suit with their Understandings. Seeing they cannot apprehend so much as the Words signifie, they will make the Words signifie no more than they can apprehend.

This St. Peter observed in his Days; where speaking of St. Paul, he saith, *As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of those things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own Destruction,* 2 Pet. 3. 16. Where he plainly speaks, not of the Words, but Things themselves; for it is not ἐν αἷς, in which Epistles, but ἐν οἷς; amongst which things in those Epistles, there are *δυσωρίθα τινὰ*, some things hard to be understood.

Such are those great Mysteries of the most Blessed Trinity, the Divinity, and Incarnation of the Son of God, and the like; which are as plainly revealed in Scripture, as things of that Nature could be; and yet many have had the Impudence to deny them, only upon that Account; because their Reasons forsooth were not able to comprehend them. These are they who Lucifer-like aspire to be like God himself, *who would measure the*
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Water in the hollow of their Hands, and meet out the Heavens with a Span, who would comprehend the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, weigh the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance. Nay, which is worse, they would measure Heaven by Earth; Eternity by Time, God by themselves; and believe nothing of his Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehensible Essence, but what they can comprehend within the narrow compass of their own Reason, altho' God himself hath been pleased to affirm it. As if the Testimony of God was not a stronger Ground whereupon to build our most holy Faith, than Humane Reason? Which certainly hath nothing else to do in such Mysteries; but to search into the Truth of the Divine Revelation, which being either supposed or proved, we have all the Reason in the World to believe what is so revealed, whether we understand it or no. But these great Masters of Reason, have so little of that which they so much pretend to, as not to believe this. And therefore to make the Scriptures to speak nothing but what they can comprehend, that is, nothing but what themselves please, they wrack every Word, Particle, and Sentence, transpose the Comma's, alter the Accents, violate all the Rules of true Construction, and then it is no won-

der, if they force the Scriptures to say, not what God, but what themselves would have them. And by this means it is, that the most pernicious and blasphemous of all Heresies were first broached, which whosoever swallow down are certain to be poisoned and undone for ever.

Hence therefore we may observe, how that although the Scriptures contain none but sound and wholesome Words, such as *Timothy* heard of *St. Paul*; yet such is the Weakness of Men's Understandings, such the Corruption of their Judgments, such the Perverseness of their Wills, the Disorder of their Affections, and the Pravity of their whole Souls, that they extract Poison from that which was intended for their Food, draw Error out of Truth, Heresie out of the Scriptures themselves, so as to learn to blaspheme God in his own Words. But what then shall we do in this Case? How can we be ever certain that the Words we use in Matters of Religion be sound, and by consequence our Opinions orthodox, and our Sentiments of God and those eternal Truths which he hath revealed to us, such as he himself would have them? Why surely for this End it is necessary, that we indulge not our own Fancies, nor idolize our own private Opinions, but *hold fast the Form of sound Words* delivered to us
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in the Holy Scriptures, in that Sense which the Catholick Church in all Ages hath put upon them.

For the eternal Son of God having with his own Blood, purchased to himself an Universal Church, we cannot doubt but that he takes such Care of it, that, according to his Promise, *the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against it.* For which end, He, the Head of this Mystical Body, doth not only defend and protect it by his Almighty Power, but he so acts, guides, directs and governs it by his Holy Spirit, that though Errors and Heresies may sometimes disseat and trouble some parts of it, yet they can never infect the whole ; but that is still kept sound and entire, notwithstanding all the Power and Malice of Men or Devils against it. So that, if we consider the Universal Church or Congregation of faithful People, as in all Ages dispersed over the whole World ; we may easily conclude, that the greatest Part, from which the whole must be denominated, was always in the right, which the ancient Fathers were so fully perswaded of, that although the *Καθολικός* properly signifies Universal, yet they commonly used it in the same Sense as we do the Word *Orthodox* as opposed to an Heretick, calling an *Orthodox* Man a Catholick, that is, a Son of the

Catholick Church: As taking it for granted, that they, and only they, which constantly adhere to the Doctrine of the Catholick or Universal Church, are truly Orthodox; which they could not do, unless they had believed the Catholick Church to be so. And besides that, it is part of our very Creed, that the Catholick Church is Holy, which she could not be, except free from Heresy, as directly opposite to true Holiness.

He therefore that would be sure not to fall into damnable Errors, must be sure also to continue firm and stedfast, to the Doctrine of the Universal Church, as being grounded upon the Scriptures rightly understood: For so every thing is, that she hath taught us. For the Catholick Church never undertook as the Romish hath done, to coin any new Doctrines of her own Head. No, She always took the Scriptures for the only Standard of Truth; and hath accordingly delivered her Sense of them, in such Words as she judged to agree exactly with those which are there used.

And therefore it is observable, that the Church never undertook publickly to determine any Truth, until it was first denied, nor to interpret the Scriptures, until they were first perverted. If no Hereticks had ever risen up in the Church, the Church
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had never held any general Councils. And if the Scripture Words and Phrases had not been first abused, and wrested to a wrong and contrary Sense to what they were intended, she had never invented other Words to explain them. But when the Enemy had sown Tares in the Lord's Field, the Church could not but endeavour to root them out, or at least to keep them from spreading any further. When wicked Men had offered Violence to the Word of God, his Spouse could do no less than defend it, and declare the true Sense and Meaning of it to her Children.

As for Example, that great Fundamental Article of our Christian Faith, upon which, not only our Religion, but our eternal Salvation depends; the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour, is so plainly, so fully, so frequently asserted in holy Writ, that the Church did for many Years together believe, acknowledge and preach it, only in Scripture Words, and needed not as yet any other Words, whereby to express it. But when it was once denied, and the Scripture Words so far abused, as that a quite contrary Sense was extorted from them, then it was time for the Catholick Church to appear in its Behalf: And being accordingly assembled in a general Council at *Nice*, She there determined that the

Son is ὁμούσιος τῷ πατρὶ, of the same Substance or Essence with the Father : Which Words she then used only for the clearer Explication of the several Places in Scripture, where the Divinity of Christ is asserted. For *Athanasius*, who was present at the Council, saith, that the Fathers gathering the Sense of the Scriptures concerning our Saviour, εἰρήνευσεν τὸ ὁμούσιον, pronounced him to be ὁμούσιος. And therefore, though the Word was not in Scripture, they intended no more by it, than what was there expressed in other Words.

I know that the *Arrians* complained that the Word ὑσία was no where to be found in Holy Writ. But though that Greek Word be not, yet certainly there is no Word in all the Greek Language that more exactly answers to the most proper Name, of God יהוה than ὑσία doth. And indeed the Word Κύριος, which the Apostles use, and whereby the *Septuagint* Translate יהוה, is much of the same signification in its Original ; from the old Word Κύρω, the same with εἰμι and ὑπάρχω. And besides that, the Council of *Nice* did not invent this Word, but it had been used in the Church all along before. For *Athanasius* saith, That some Bishops both of *Rome* and *Alexandria* had used it 150 Years before that time. And that *Eusebius Caesari-*
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ensis himself acknowledged as much, and upon that Account afterwards subscribed to the Council. Who those Ancient Bishops were, we know not, their Works being now lost. But *Tertullian*, who lived about 150 Years before that time, in his Apology, saith, That the Son is called God *ex unitate Substantia*, and in his Book against *Praxeas*, that the Three Persons are One God *per Substantia unitatem*, which perfectly agrees with the Greek Word *ομοιουσιον*. And seeing they that lived so very near to the Apostles used this Word, it is more than probable that they also were not the first Inventers of it, but that they had received it from the Apostles themselves.

Howsoever, this is certain, that in the Writings both of the Apostles and Prophets, we frequently meet with the Truth it self, which is signify'd by this Word, which having been confirmed by the Council of *Nice*, it hath been constantly used by the Universal Church as the true and full Interpretation of the Holy Scripture concerning the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour ; And so generally received by all Christians of all Ages, that after the *Arrians* were once silenced, it never met with any considerable Opponents in the World, but *Mahomet* and *Socinus* with their

their Followers, which deserve not the Name of Christians.

The same may be observed of the Third general Council held at *Ephesus*: For when *Nestorius* had affirm'd, that in Christ, as there are two Natures, so there are two Persons likewise, one Person as he was God begotten of the Father,; the other as Man, born of his Mother, and therefore that the Blessed Virgin could not properly be called *Θεοτόκος*. The Council, for the Determination of this Question, did not only consult the several Texts in Scripture relating to our blessed Saviour, but considered likewise in what Sense those places had been understood by the Catholick Church before that time; for which end they caused *Nicene Creed*, and several Passages out of *St. Cyprian*, *St. Basil*, *Athanasius*, *Gregory*, *Nazianzen*, and many others to be read in Council. And from thence they gathered, and therefore pronounced, that according to the Scriptures, as interpreted by the Catholick Church, Christ though he have two Natures, yet he is but One Person, and by consequence that the Virgin *Mary* might properly be called *Θεοτόκος*, because the same Person who was born of her, is truly God as well as Man, which being once determined by an universal Council to be
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the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures in this Point, hath been acknowledged by the universal Church ever since, till this time.

I might instance in other general Councils, wherein the same way and method of proceeding was religiously observed. For they never took upon them to force new Articles of Faith, but only to explain and establish the old Ones; which being delivered in Scripture, were believed all along by the Catholick Church before that time. And certainly whatsoever hath been thus approved by general Councils, and received and taught by the universal Church in all Ages, we have all the reason in the World to believe it to be the true Doctrine of the Gospel, every way corresponding with what is delivered in the Scriptures, though it be not *totidem verbis* contained in them. Be sure no sober Man, but must acknowledge, it is more possible for himself, yea, and for any particular Church to Err, than it is for the universal Church to do so. And therefore it must needs be the safest way to use Scripture Words in such a Sense which the universal Church hath always put upon them, and by consequence such Words also, whereby the universal Church hath always expressed her Sense of God's Mind

Mind as revealed to us in Scripture, and to look upon them all as sound Words, such as *St. Paul* here speaks of, such as will convey right and sound Notions of the Divine Myſteries to our Underſtandings.

I have inſiſted the longer upon this, both becauſe it is ſo neceſſary to our being ſound in the Faith, and alſo becauſe of the great uſe that may be made of it in defending our Church againſt its Adverſaries on all ſides. For our Church, as to its Doctrine as well as Diſcipline, is ſettled upon ſo firm a Baſis, ſo truly Catholick, that none can oppoſe what ſhe Teacheth, without denying not only the Scriptures, but the Scriptures as Interpreted by the univerſal Church. So that we may juſtly Challenge all the World to ſhew us any one Point or Article of Faith, wherein our Church differs from the Catholick in all Ages, ſince the Apoſtles Days. Which I think is more than can be ſaid of any other National Church in the whole World. There being no other, that I know of, that keeps to the Form of ſound Words delivered in Scripture as interpreted by the univerſal Church ſo firmly and conſtantly as ours doth.

Not to trouble you at preſent with any other. There is the Church of *Rome* that pretends

pretends herself to be the only Catholick Church in the World, Examine but the words that she hath taken up of late, the great Words whereby she distinguisheth herself from all other Churches, and you will find that they agree neither with Scripture nor Antiquity, much less with both, as all sound Words do. What those Words are which she insists so much upon, is easy to be found out, for we have a Form of them prescribed and published by Pope *Pius IV.* in the Acts of the Council of *Trent*, and inserted into their Canon Law; a Form of Words that every one is bound to Swear to, before he can be admitted into any Degree in their Universities, into any Benefice, Dignity or Preferment in their Church, or indeed into any publick Employment whatsoever. As appears by the Bull of the said Pope to that purpose. But in this whole Form of words, except the *Nicene Creed*, with which it begins, to make the rest go down the better, there is scarce any one Word which can properly be called sound, in the Sense that I have now explained. There is *Transubstantio*, *Purgatorium*, and several such Novel words, which many of the Papists themselves have acknowledged can never be proved from Scripture. And if so, I am sure they are not consonant to
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the Doctrine of the universal Church. For she never proposed any thing as necessary to be believed, but what she could prove from Scripture.

It is not worth our Labour to run over the whole Form. But give me leave to single out one Paragraph, because of its relation to the Conspiracy which was yesterday prevented, and we prais'd God for our Deliverance from it. The Words are these, *Sanctam Catholicam & Apostolicam Romanam Ecclesiam, omnium Ecclesiarum matrem & magistram agnosco: Romanoque Pontifici, Sancti Petri Apostolorum principis Successori, ac Jesu Christi vicario, veram obedientiam spondeo ac juro.* An excellent Form of Words truly, for a Man to swear to, directly contrary both to the Scriptures and the Catholick Church. The Church of Rome, as now established, a Catholick and Apostolick Church? The Mother and the Mistress of all other Churches? But that is nothing in comparison of what follows; The Bishop of Rome, Successor to St Peter, and the Vicar of Christ.

And if you would know in what Sense he is the Vicar of Christ, their Authors commonly tell you, that he is so *Christ's Vicar* upon Earth, that Christ and he are but one and the same Head of the Church,
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and so every Creature is as much bound to be subject to the Pope, as to Christ himself. And therefore *Antonius Puccius* in a Speech he made in the Lateran Council to Pope *Leo X.* there present ; was neither afraid, nor asham'd to use these Words to him, *Quasi in te, uno, vero, & legitimo Christi & Dei vicario, propheticum illud debuerit rursus impleri; Adorabant eum omnes reges terra omnes gentes servient ei.* So horribly hath this one Word or Title given to the Pope been abused by them. It hath indeed been the Occasion, not only of their Pride and Ambition, but likewise of all the Villanies, Persecutions and Assassinations that have been executed or attempted by them. For the constant Use of this Word having imprinted in their Minds a Fancy, that the Bishop of *Rome* sits there in Christ's stead, to manage and order the Affairs of the whole World, whatsoever he commands, be it never so wicked and impious, never so cruel and barbarous, they look upon it as sacred, and reckon themselves obliged to obey it, as much, yea much more than what Christ himself hath commanded.

But, if after all you ask them what right he hath to this Name, how he comes to be Christ's Vicar upon Earth, more than any other Bishop? Their Answer is, because
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he is *St. Peter's* Successor. And therefore to make out this Title, it is necessary for them to prove two Things: *First*, That *St. Peter* himself was made *Christ's* Vicar more than any other Apostle; and then, that the Bishop of *Rome* succeeds him in that Office. As for the first, they quote those Words of our Lord to *Peter*, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church*, Matt. 16. But it is plain, that the Catholick Church never understood those Words in any such Sense, as if *Peter* was by them constituted the Vicar of *Christ*. And besides, it is plain also, that although we should understand the Words of *St. Peter's* Person, yet there is nothing at all conferred upon him by them. For our Lord speaks not in the Present, but only in the Future Tense, and so doth not grant him any thing as yet, but only promiseth to give him something hereafter. *Upon this Rock*, saith he, *I will build my Church, and I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And therefore to understand these Words aright, we must consider when, and how this Promise was fulfill'd. And that we shall find to have been after the Resurrection of *Christ*, when he said to his Apostles, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose*
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soever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained, Joh. 20. Now was that Promise fulfilled: Now were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to St. Peter, but not to him only, but to the rest of the Apostles with him; so that if St. Peter was then made the Vicar of Christ, so were all the other Apostles as well as he. And by consequence all other Bishops as well as he of Rome.

But after all this, suppose St. Peter was the chief of all the Apostles: suppose our Saviour did design him some peculiar Honour, by saying, *upon this Rock I will build my Church*: What is all this to the Pope of Rome? How comes he to be so much concern'd in any thing that was said, or done to Peter. It is no where Recorded in the Gospel, that our Saviour ever so much as mentioned the City of Rome, much less the Bishop of that City, which certainly it was very necessary he should have done; had he designed him for his perpetual Vicar to the end of the World. He that pretends to so high an Honour and Dignity as this is, had need have something more to shew for it, than the Bishop of Rome hath, who hath so little, that it was a Thousand Years after Christ, before this little was

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given to him. For as I remember, Saint Bernard was the first that ever called him κατ' ἐξουσίαν, the Vicar of Christ. and therefore, it is far from being the Sense of the Catholick Church.

But since this Word hath been used, and this Title hath been given to the Bishop of Rome; what Mischief hath it done in the World? For he conceiting himself to represent Christ's Person upon Earth, and to be Invested with all his Power and Authority, at length began to look upon himself as something more than a Man; at least, far above all Mortals upon Earth; and therefore hath taken upon him to depose Kings, to absolve their Subjects from their Allegiance, and to persecute, murder, assassinate all sorts of Persons that he is pleased to call Hereticks. And all this under the pretence of Religion, and Authority derived from Christ himself, as being his Vicar upon Earth.

Oh Blessed Jesu! that ever thy Sacred Name should be thus abused, by the Sons of Men! That ever any one should dare to pretend Power from thee, to destroy those whom thou camest to Save with thine own Blood! What shall we say unto thee, Oh thou Redeemer of Men? We blush and are ashamed of our selves, that
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ever any of our Nature which thou wast pleased to assume, should be so injurious to thee? How long, oh Lord, Holy and True; dost thou not Judge and Avenge thy self on all those who thus continually Blaspheme thy Great and All-glorious Name, and use it to Palliate their most Atrocious Crimes, and Barbarous Enormities? Abate their Pride, assuage their Malice, and confound their Devices, that thy Name may be no longer dishonoured, thy Gospel perverted, nor thy Holy Catholick Church oppressed by them!

I have taken the boldness to make this short Address to our Lord and Master Christ, as being confident, that he, according to his Promise, is present with us, and will in his good time, grant what we have desired of him. In the mean while, we must learn Obedience, and Submission to his Divine Will; and above all things, take care to keep within the Bounds that he hath set us, and to continue sound Members of that Mystical Body, whereof he is Head. For which end, we must be sure to observe this Apostolical Rule, to *bold fast the Form of sound Words*; which his Apostle judged so necessary, that he minds Timothy of it, not only here, but likewise in his former Epistle to him, saying 1 Tim. 6. 20.

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O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy Charge; that is, the *fides depositum*, as Saint Hierome expounds it, that sound Faith which is committed to thee; and then he adds, avoiding τὰς βεβήλους καινοφανίας, profane and vain Babblings, as contrary to the sound Words before spoken of; or, as the Latin Fathers generally render it, *Devitaris profanas vocum novitates*: Reading, I suppose Καινοφανίας, instead of καινοφανίας: But the Sense is much the same. For all new ways of speaking in Divinity, especially in our Age, is at the best but vain Babbling, and commonly profane, possessing Men's Minds with such Notions and Conceptions of things, as will infallibly lead them into Error and Heresie. Read but the wild extravagant Opinions of the first Hereticks and Schismatics, that disturbed the Church; and afterwards take a view of those which after Ages have produc'd; together with such as have been either Reviv'd or Invented in our days, and you will find them all made up of new Words, strange Phrases, and odd Expressions, which please the Ears, and then debauch the Minds of them which hearken to them. We need not go far for Instances; every Sect amongst us, will supply us with too many, inasmuch, that they may be all known from one another,

ther, meerly by their Words, and new Modes of speaking; whereby they would seem to Interpret, when indeed they Pervert, the Scriptures, and wrest them to their own Destruction.

Hence therefore, it will be our Interest and Wisdom, as it is our Duty, to avoid those new Words and Phrases, which have been lately started in the Church, as well as the Opinions which are Couch'd under them; and to look upon them at the best, but superfluous and unnecessary, upon that very account, because they are new. For nothing certainly can be necessary to be believed, or spoken in our Days, which hath not been so all along.

Especially, it concerns us, who are to Instruct others in the way of Bliss, to use none but *sound Words*, such as are consonant to the Scriptures, as Interpreted by the Catholick Church in all Ages. I speak not this of my self; it is the expresse Command of our Church, in the Canons she put forth in the Year 1571. where she hath these words, *Inprimis verò videbant concionatores, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod à populo religiosè teneris & credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrina veteris aut novi Testamenti, quodque ex illà ipsà Doctrinà Catholici Patres, & Veteres Episcopi collegerint.*

So wisely hath our Church provided against Novelties; insomuch, that had this one Rule been duly observ'd as it ought, there would have been no such thing as *Heresse* or *Schism* amongst us. But we should all have continued firm, both to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Universal Church. And so should have held fast the *Form of sound Words*, according the Apostles Council in my Text, in the sense I have now Explained it; which therefore, that we may for the future do, I shall conclude my present Discourse with this brief Exhortation.

Men, Brethren and Fathers.

Give me leave to speak freely to you, of the Church you live in. A Church, not only in its Doctrine and Discipline, but in all things else exactly conformable to the *Primitive*, the *Apostolical*, the *Catholick Church*. For, was that no sooner Planted by Christ, but it was watered by the Blood of Martyrs? So was ours. Did the Primitive Christians suffer Martyrdom from *Rome*? So did our first Reformers. Hath the *Catholick Church* been all along pestered with *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*? So hath ours. Have they endeavour'd in all Ages to Undermine, and so to Overthrow her? In this also, ours is but too much like unto her. And it is no wonder:

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For the same Reason that occasioned all the Disturbances and Oppositions that the Catholick Church ever met with, still holds good, as to ours too : Even because its Doctrine is so pure, its Discipline so severe, its Worship so solemn, and all its Rules and Constitutions so holy, perfect and divine, that Mankind, being generally debauched in their Principles and Practices, have a natural Averseness from it, if not an Antipathy against it. They would willingly go to Heaven, but are loth to be at so much Pains for it, as our Church, out of the Word of God, prescribes. And therefore would fain perswade themselves, that many of her Prescriptions are either sinful or superfluous; because not suiting forsooth with their Humour, Interest, or depraved Inclinations. But all their little Objections against her, are grounded either upon their Ignorance of what she prescribes, or else upon their Unwillingness to perform it. There are very few, either of the Papists or Sectaries, that know what our Church is, and therefore all their Zeal against it, must needs be without Knowledge. And they that have some general Notions of it, would never set themselves in good earnest upon the Observance of what she commands; and therefore cannot know what Advantage it would be to them.

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Whereas, let any one that hath a due Sense of Religion, and a real Desire of Happiness, let such a one make Tryal of our Church but for one Year; let him constantly read the Scriptures, in the Method that she prescribes; let him constantly use the Common-Prayer, according to her Directions; let him constantly observe all her Fasts, and Holy Days; let him receive the Sacrament as often as she is ready to administer it, and perform whatsoever else she hath been pleased to command; let any Man, I say, do this, and then let him be against our Church, if he can. I am confident he cannot. But our Misery is, that none of those who are out of our Church, and but few of those that are in it, will make the Experiment. And that is the Reason that those are so violent against her, and these so indifferent for her.

But let others do what they please, and answer for themselves as well as they can another Day. As for you who are here at this time, in the especial Presence of God, I humbly beseech and exhort you in the Name of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, that as he hath been pleased to admit you into so holy and pure a Church, so you would all endeavour to live up to the Rules and Orders of it, as many here present do.

First,

First, Keep close to the Words she uses in her Articles and Common Prayers. By this Means you will have a right Judgment in all things, and *hold fast the Form of sound Words* indeed. By this means you will be secure from Heresie, and entertain no Doctrine but what is Catholick and Orthodox. By this means whatsoever happens, you will still be stedfast in the Faith of Christ, and not suffer your selves to be imposed upon by the Adversaries of our Church on either Side. For if they cannot fasten new Words upon you, it will be impossible for them ever to deceive you.

But then you must remember to conform to the Discipline, as well as to the Doctrine of our Church, not hypocritically, indifferently and partially, but sincerely, constantly, universally, so as to observe and do whatsoever she commands, either in her Liturgy, Canons or Constitutions. By this Means you will live as the Primitive Fathers did, and come short of none of the most eminent Christians that ever lived since the Apostles times. By this you will shame the Adversaries of our Church into a Compliance with her, when they see how far you out-strip them in all true Grace and Virtue. Yea, by this means you will be really Saints on Earth, and glorified Saints

in Heaven. For be but you as pious towards God, as loyal to our Queen, as sober in your selves, as faithful to your Friends, as loving to your Enemies, as charitable to the Poor, as just to all, as our Church enjoins you: In a word, be but you as conformable to her, as she is to the Catholick Church in all Things, and my Life, my Eternal Life for yours, you cannot but be happy for evermore. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant we may all be, in and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, &c.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, &c.

SERMON VII.

I C O R. ii. 2.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified.

ST. Paul in this and his other Epistles often styles himself, the Apostle and the Servant of Jesus Christ, which is the highest Title he could give himself : Yea, the highest that can be given to any one upon Earth. For Jesus Christ being the greatest as well as the best Master in the World ; the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, his Service must needs be the most noble Employment, and the greatest Honour that any Mortal can have, which St Paul was so sensible of, that he delighted, he gloried in it, as he well might, more than all things else. And always looking upon himself, as standing in this relation to Jesus Christ, he made it his
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whole business, as it was his Duty to serve Him, his great Lord and Master, all he could, by setting forth his Glory and Goodness in the Redemption of Mankind. And this he did, *not with Excellency of Speech or of Wisdom*, as he speaks in the Verse before my Text, but with that Plainness and Simplicity, which became the Gospel of Christ ; which left any should wonder at, he here gives the *Corinthians* the reason of it, even because he determined *not to know or make known any thing among them, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

This was the Sum and Substance of all his Writing, and of all his Preaching. And so it ought to be of all theirs, who succeed him and the rest of the Apostles in the Ministry of the Gospel, for necessity is laid upon us ; Yea, *woe unto us if we preach not the Gospel*, 1 Cor. 9. 16. Unless we do that, we do not answer the End of our Ministry, which was ordained on purpose to plant, propagate and keep up the Knowledge of Jesus Christ upon Earth, that Men may always know Him, by whom they may be saved, and without whom they can never saved. *For there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved.* Act. 4. 12. And therefore it is in vain to expect it from any other. *Aristotle can never*

never save us with all his Philosophy, nor *Tully* with all his Rhetorick. Nor *Plato* neither with his fine Notions, borrowed from *Moses*. No, nor *Moses* himself. He must lead us through the Wilderness, but *Joshua*, or, as the *Greeks* call him, *Jesu* must bring us to the Land of *Canaan*. The Law must direct our steps, the Gospel only can save our Souls. The Gospel, as it reveals *Jesus Christ* our Saviour to us, and therefore reveals Him, that we may know Him, and how to be saved by Him.

Which kind of Knowledge the Apostle preferr'd before all other : And not only before the Knowledge of all other things, but before all other things he knew. *Yea, doubtless, saith he, and I count all things but loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Phil. 3. 8.* He having attained to the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ* his Lord, he found so much Excellency in it, that he reckoned that he should have been a great Loser, if he should have gained all things else, without knowing Him : And therefore thought he could not do any Men a greater kindness, than to communicate this most excellent Knowledge to them, by preaching *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified. Which he therefore did, notwithstanding that in those Days also, as well as ours, there

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were some that were offended, and others that laugh'd at him for it. *We Preach*, saith he, *Christ crucified*; to the Jews a *stumbling Block*, and to the Greeks *foolishness*, but to them which are call'd, both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD.* 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. They who were called to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, could not but admire and adore him, as the Power of the Almighty, and the Wisdom of the All-Wise GOD: Tho' other People would either stumble or make a mock at it. But what sort of People they were, we may learn from the same Apostle, saying, *the Preaching of the Cross is to them that perish, foolishness.* 1 Cor. 1. 18. And again, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*; in whom the GOD of this World hath blinded the Eyes of them who believe not, lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of GOD, should shine upon them. 2 Cor. 4. 3. Wherefore such, if there be any such now, who deride the Preaching of the Gospel, or despise the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, have but little reason to value themselves upon it. For my part I would not be in their Case for all this World.

St Paul, be sure, when inspir'd by GOD himself, was of another mind. For he *determined not to know any thing*, nor to make

make any thing known among them to whom he preached, *save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.* And having the Example of so great an Apostle before me, I shall by GOD's Assistance entertain your Devout Meditations at this time, with considering only what we ought to know of Jesus Christ, and how much that is to be desir'd and taught before all other Knowledge.

That there was such a Person once upon Earth, who was called Jesus Christ, we all know. But we must know withal that He was such a Person, that there never was, nor ever can be such another in the World. For He was not only a Man, such as we are, but GOD : Nor GOD only, such as the Father is, but Man too : And both GOD and Man in one and the same Person. Unless we know him to be GOD, we cannot believe him to be Jesus, the Saviour : Unless we know him to be Man, we cannot believe him to be Christ the Anointed : And unless we know him to be both GOD and Man in One Person, we cannot believe in him as the One Mediator between GOD and Men. So that this is the great Foundation of our Christian Faith, upon which all our Hopes and Expectations are grounded : And therefore it is so clearly reveal'd in GOD's

Holy Word, that none but such as willfully shut their Eyes, or harden their Hearts, can be either ignorant or doubtful of it. And if we know this, and carry it always in our minds, it will give us great light into all things else that we ought to know or believe concerning Jesus Christ.

As that, this *Immanuel*, G O D with us, as the Prophet calls him, *Isaiah 7. 14* Or as an Angel calls Him, τὸ ἅγιον, *that Holy Thing. Luc. 1. 35.* a Thing made up of G O D and Man together, being conceiv'd and made so by the Holy Ghost coming upon, and the Power of the Highest over-shadowing the blessed Virgin, He was accordingly born of her, and grew up as Men are wont to do : Living as it were *incognito*, till He was about thirty Years of Age, and then He shewed Himself openly to the World, and manifested forth his Divine Power and Glory, by doing such Works, which none could do, as He did them, but GOD only : That Men might see and believe, that although He appear'd among them only as a Man, yet He was at the same time the One Almighty GOD. He declared that the End of his being made the Son of Man, and coming as such among them, *was to give his Life a ransom for many. Matt. 20. 28.* He spake as never Man spake, for His answers were all

all Oracles, the Answers of G O D. He revealed many great Truths, which had before lain hid, such especially as were necessary to the purifying Men's Hearts with a right Faith in G O D. He vindicated the Law which He had publish'd upon Mount *Sinai*, from the false Glosses which the *Jews* had put upon it, declaring the true Meaning and the full Extent of it. He taught Men their whole Duty to G O D, to themselves, and to one another; and that they must give Account to Him at the last Day, how they have performed it. He shewed them how to do what He taught, by doing it Himself : And living in all respects as He taught them to live. For He never thought, or spake, or did amiss, but went about continually doing good ; so that He fulfill'd all Righteousness in the Nature of Man, as much as any Man or *Adam* himself in his State of Innocence was capable of doing it. And more too. For His Righteousness was the Righteousness not only of Man, but of G O D, which was more than ever was or could be required of mere Men, and of greater worth than the Righteousness of all the Men in the World, could have been, if they had all continued in a State of absolute Perfection.

The only begotten Son of G O D, of one Substance with the Father, having thus conversed with Men, in their Nature also, for some Years, until he had finish'd all that he thought good to do, while He lived upon Earth, He then suffer'd himself to be apprehended, arraign'd, condemn'd, and at last crucified, as if He had been some great Malefactor.

This the Apostle here lays great stress upon, determining with himself, *not only to know Jesus Christ, but Him crucified*, which he had great reason to mention in particular, because unless Jesus Christ had died, and unless He had died the accursed Death of the Cross, He could not have attained the End of His coming into the World; for He would not have given His Life as a Ransom for any, so as to redeem them from the Curse which G O D had laid upon all *that continue not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them. Deut. 27. 26. Galat. 3. 10.* which therefore that He might, while He hung upon the Cross, He voluntarily and of His own accord, gave up the Ghost, and died in that Nature which was united to his Divine Person, offering it up as a Sacrifice instead of all that are of that Nature, so as *to be a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World. 1 John. 2. 2.*

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The Death which He suffer'd in the whole Nature of Man, being equivalent to the Death of all Mankind : And of infinitely greater Value and Merit. For if all Mankind had died eternally, their Death could have been no more than the Death of so many human and finite Persons, whereas His was the Death of a Person who was Infinite and Divine. And therefore by His dying upon the Cross, He did not only *redeem us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, Gal. 3. 13.* but he merited also for us the Grace and Favour of G O D, and all the Blessings that we can desire to make us Holy and Happy for ever : All which G O D hath therefore in him, and for His sake, promised to all that believe in Him.

Now the Word of G O D being thus fulfill'd, and his Justice abundantly satisf'd for the Sins of Mankind, by the Death which his only begotten Son had suffer'd in their Nature and stead ; the third day after He rose again from the dead, and having continued 40 Days upon Earth, to convince his Disciples that he was indeed risen ; He then went up to Heaven, where He hath been ever since, *and is now at the right Hand of G O D, Angels, Authorities and Powers being made subject to him. 1 Pet. 3. 22.* For G O D hath

hath there set Him above all Principalties, and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His Body. *Ephes. 1. 21, 22.* as being purchased with his Blood. *Act. 20. 28.* It was for the sake of His said Church, that this Supreme Authority and Power over all things is given to Him, that he may order and dispose of all things so, that nothing may ever destroy His Church, nor hinder the Salvation of any of the sound Members of it, but that according to his Word, *Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. John 3. 16.*

Such a Glorious, such an Almighty Saviour have we now in Heaven, at the right Hand of G O D, where He is the Mediator between G O D and Men. *1 Tim. 2. 5.* and is therefore able to save them to the uttermost that come unto G O D by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. *Heb. 7. 25.* For G O D hath exalted Him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give Repentance to Israel and Forgiveness of Sins. *Act. 5. 31.* First Repentance and then Forgiveness. And if we accordingly believe and trust on Him
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in the first place to give us Grace to repent and turn to GOD with all our Hearts, He will most certainly give it us in the use of the Means which he hath appointed and settled in His Church for that End and Purpose. And when we have obtain'd that, then, and not till then, we may be sure that He will take us into His own particular Care, that He will wash us from our Sins in His Blood: He will make our Peace with GOD, and restore us to His Favour. He will supply the Defects of our Righteousness with His own. His Grace shall be always sufficient for us, and his Strength made perfect in our Weakness thro' the whole Course of our Lives here, and then He will bring us to that everlasting Kingdom which he hath purchased for all that truly believe in Him and obey Him. Which GOD therefore grant we may all for the future do.

These are some of the great Truths reveal'd in the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ, which I thought it my Duty in His Name to put you in mind of, tho' I do not question but you know them already; and heartily wish that all Men did so. And that they had not only a superficial and speculative, but a practical and experimental Knowledge of them, for that after all is the *Knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified*, which the Apostle speaks of, and accounts

counts so excellent. Not that which swims only in the Brain, but that sinks into the Heart, moves the Affections, and puts us upon believing and living in all Respects according to what we know. So that we have them not only in the Notion and Theory, but see and tast the wondrous things that He hath done for us, and feel the happy Effects of them in our selves: finding by our own Experience, that He assumed our Humane, by our partaking of His Divine Nature: That He died for us, by our living to Him: That He is exalted above all things in Heaven, by our preferring Him before all things upon Earth. They who have attained to such a Knowledge of Christ as this, will need no Arguments to perswade them that it excells all other. They feel more of it than others can tell them: And more than they can tell to others. Whereas they who never had any such Sense or Experience of it upon their own Minds, will hardly be convinc'd of the Excellency of it by any Words that can be us'd about it. Neither indeed are there any to be found, whereby it can be fully express'd.

But howsoever, it may not be amiss to observe, That the Excellency of this Knowledge appears sufficiently from the Height and Excellency of the Objects upon which

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it is exercis'd. For whereas our Knowledge of other Things lies low and flat upon the Ground, perplex'd, and entangled among the Creatures which GOD hath made, this soars aloft upon him that made them; among the Divine Perfections which he manifested in the Redemption of Mankind, and the highest Mysteries of his holy and everlasting Gospel. For by knowing Christ Jesus, we know the Word and Son of GOD, *by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made that was made. John 1. 2.* By knowing the Son, we know the Father also, *whom no Man knoweth save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him. Matt. 11. 27.* By knowing Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we know how Grace and Truth came into the World. *John 1. 17.* How the Almighty Creator of all things comes to be so merciful and propitious to fall'n Men, and not to the fall'n Angels, altho' they be both alike His Creatures. How all the Losses that we sustained in the first Adam, are abundantly repair'd and made up by the last Adam. How, *as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners; so by the Obedience of one, many are made Righteous. Rom. 5. 19.* How the Devotions and good Works which we sincerely perform come to be acceptable to
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GOD, notwithstanding their manifold Imperfections. How *all things come to work together for Good to thoem that love GOD.* *Row. 8. 28.* How there comes to be such a Mediatour between GOD and Men, who can bring two Partis that are at an infinite Distance together, and reconcile them to one another. How we who at present are sinful Mortals upon Earth, may e're long be made glorified Saints in Heaven But why do I offer at shewing any of those glorious Sights which the Knowledge of Jesus Christ lets us into ? These are Contemplations fit for Angels. The Angels themselves desire to look into them ; and the more they see, the more they admire and wonder. How much more should we do so, who are so highly concern'd in them, more than the Angels are ? We certainly may well desire and determine with *St. Paul, not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

And yet it is much to be observ'd, that tho' this Knowledge be so high and wonderful, it is the most certain Knowledge that we can have of any thing that is. In comparison of which our Knowledge of other things is generally no more than bare Guess and Conjecture ; as being receiv'd only from our Senses or Reason, or from the Testimony of other Men. Which ways we
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know are all fallible. Whereas we have the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, from the infallible Testimony of GOD himself: who hath revealed all things necessary for us to know concerning Him in his own Word. Whereby it comes to pass that we are as certain of every thing that is written or said there, concerning Jesus Christ, as we can be of the most evident thing that is. As certain that *He and the Father are one*, as that two and two make four. *John 10. 30.* As certain that *He came into the World to save Sinners*, as that there are any Sinners in the World to save. As certain that *He rose from the Dead*, as that we are now alive. As certain that *He is now at the right Hand of GOD in Heaven*, as that we are now in this place. For our Knowledge of these and such like things, being grounded upon the Word of GOD, of Truth it self, it must needs be as certain as it is possible to be; as certain as that GOD's Word is true.

And it is very well for us that it is so, considering the great use and need that we always have of it. I do not deny but that the Knowledge of other things is in many Cases very useful. Some to private Persons, some to publick Societies; some to whole Kingdoms: Some to Mankind in general: Some to the right understanding
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of the Holy Scriptures, and so to the Knowledge of Christ himself. Yea, there is scarce any sort of Knowledge but, some way or other, helps towards the raising, refining, and enlarging our Understanding, and so to the making us more capable of knowing Him. But whatsoever it may be at present, unless it tends to that End, at last it will stand us in no stead: For what if we were skilled in all the Arts and Sciences that ever were invented, and could manage them every one to the best advantage? What if we had the whole System of Logick in our heads, and could argue with all the Art and Sophistry that ever Men did? What if we could dive into the depths of Natural Philosophy, and see into the Springs and Movements of all second Causes? What if we had turned over all the Records of the Church, and the Histories of all Places and Ages since the World began, and could reduce every thing that ever happen'd, to its own proper time? What if we could count the number of the Stars, call them all by their Names, and describe their Motions to an Hairs breadth? What if we understood all Languages, and could discourse with People of all the Nations upon Earth in their own Mother Tongue? Notwithstanding all this, unless we know

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Jesus Christ also, and *Him crucified*, we should be lost and undone for ever. For as much as there is no way to be saved but by Him : Neither can any be saved by Him, unless they believe in Him, nor believe in Him, unless they first know Him; for as the Apostle observes, *How can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard*, and so know not what to believe? *Rom. 10. 14.*

This Knowledge therefore being so necessary to our believing in Christ, it is so likewise to every thing requisite to our obtaining the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls. In so much that we cannot make one true step towards Heaven without it, no more than the Children of *Israel*, could have gone through the Wilderness to the Land of *Canaan*, without having that Type of Christ, the Pillar of a Cloud by Day, and of Fire by Night to guide them. For the whole of our Salvation from first to last, is begun, continued, and finish'd by GOD our Saviour. And unless we know Him, we can neither know what to do, nor do any thing we know, in order to our being saved by Him. And therefore we see, how they who live without the Knowledge of Christ, live as without GOD in the World. *They may profess to know GOD, but in Works*
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they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate Tit. 1. 16. Their Eyes are so blind that they cannot see, and their Hearts so hard, they cannot feel any difference between Good and Evil. *They may be wise to do evil, but to do good they have no Knowledge.* Jer. 4. 22. They live in perfect slavery to their own Humours and Passions, and to the Devil himself, being *taken Captive by him at his Will.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. And all because they know not Him, *who was manifested, to destroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 John 3. 8.

But as St Peter observeth, *Men escape the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. 2. 20. For by it we know how to overcome the World, so as to live above it : How to resist the Devil, so as to make him flee from us. How to work out our Salvation, so as to make our Calling and Election sure. How to mortify our Sins, so as to walk in newness of Life, thro' all the changes and chances of this mortal Life till we come to Life Eternal. To which the true Knowledge of Christ, will as certainly bring us at last, as if we had it already. As we learn from Him who alone can give it, saying to his Father, *This is Life Eternal, that they might know thee the*

the only true G O D, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. John 17. 3.

When I think of these things, I cannot but reflect upon the Corruptions of the Age we live in, and the cause of them. It was our great happiness that in the last Age save one, the Doctrine of our Church was so reform'd, that it agrees exactly with G O D's Holy Word, as understood and interpreted by his whole Catholick Church. And it might be reasonably expected, that where the Doctrine was so well reformed, Men's Lives would have been so too. But we find the contrary by sad experience. That piece of Reformation is still wanting, and seems to be reserv'd for this Age, and for this Happy and Glorious Reign, wherein some Attempts have been made already towards it. But all will be in vain, unless a way could be found out, that all who are born and bred within the Pale of our Church, may understand the Doctrine which she teacheth, particularly that which respects our Blessed Saviour. For otherwise, although the Branches may be lopp'd off, or kept from spreading abroad and above Ground, the root of Vice and Wickedness will still remain. For that can never be destroy'd but by the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, which he knows is but rarely found among us, and that hitherto

there hath not been that care taken for the Propagation of it, which he design'd and expected when he was Graciously pleased in so wonderful a manner, to cause the Doctrine of the Church of *England* to be so well reform'd.

But to our great Comfort, He knows withall that the Fault is not in our Church it self. For she hath done all she could to spread his Gospel all over the Kingdom, that all might know Him, from the highest to the lowest Person in it.

She hath order'd that all who are young or ignorant should be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, every *Sunday* and *Holiday* throughout the Year. She hath set apart several Feast, and Fast-days every Year, to keep up the Memory, and put People in mind of what our Blessed Saviour said, or did, or suffer'd for us; and of what his Apostles, and Evangelists did or taught by his Direction and Assistance. She hath compos'd her Liturgy of such Lessons, Psalms, Hymns, Creeds, Prayers, and Collects, that it containeth all the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith: So that one would think it morally impossible, that any, who heartily use and attend diligently to the Prayers of our Church, as they ought to do, every day, should be ignorant of any one thing,
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that is needful for them to know. So great care hath our Church taken, that all who live in her Communion might come to the true Knowledge of Christ their Saviour. And if her Rules and Orders were but as Religiously observ'd by the whole Nation, as they are wisely and piously contriv'd by Her, what an Understanding, what a Wise, what an Holy People should we then be ? Then would be fulfill'd that which was spoken by the Prophet, *That the Earth, at least this part of it, shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea, Isa. II. 9.* And then we should clearly see of what mighty use and advantage it would be, not only for particular Persons, but for the whole Kingdom, *to know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

Neither is this so unpleasant, or so insipid a kind of Knowledge as some imagine. But they are such only who never tasted of it. For they who have, cannot but have found so much sweetness in it, that they can relish no other, but long for more and more of it every day, never thinking they can have enough. It is indeed the only true Joy and Comfort of a Christian's Heart. The Knowledge of other things may please our Fancies, this only can satisfy and delight our Souls.

For whatsoever else we know, be sure we all know our selves to be Sinners, and if Sinners then liable to the Wrath of GOD, and to all the Curses and Judgments that He hath threatned against Sinners. The thoughts whereof lie so heavy upon some Mens Mind, that they are ready to sink down into Horror and Despair : And they make all Men sometimes sad and melancholy, do what they can, in the midst of all their seeming Mirth and Jollity. And where shall we seek for any Comfort and Support ? We may look where we will, but we shall never find any but in the Christian Religion. For it is that only which affords us certain Principles whereon to trust for GOD's Mercy in the Pardon of our Sins, and his Reconciliation to us, in his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleas'd. Wherefore they who know not Him, can see no ground on which to build their hope of Pardon and Salvation ; but whensoever they reflect upon themselves, if they ever do so, are tormented with the frightful Apprehensions of that Judgment and fiery Indignation which will at last devour them. Whereas, *to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified* : To know that the only begotten Son of GOD came into the World to save Sinners, such Sinners as we are : That He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and
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for the Sins of the whole World : That He was deliver'd for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification ; that He is now our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, appearing now in his Presence on our behalf, and preparing a Place in Heaven for us against our Departure out of this wicked World ; this raiseth up our drooping Spirits : This fills our Souls with Solid and Substantial Joy : With Joy in Him, *Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, 1 Pet. 1. 8.*

Lastly, As this is the most sublime, the most certain, the most useful and the most pleasant Knowledge we can ever have ; So it is the most lasting. For it is everlasting. It is *S^t Jerome's* Advice ; *Discamus in terris quorum nobis scientia perseveret in Cælo ;* Let us learn those Things upon Earth, the Knowledge whereof will continue with us in Heaven. This is the only Knowledge that will do so. When we die all our other Thoughts will perish : But the Knowledge of Jesus Christ will go along with us into the other World, and there stick by us for ever : And will be advanced also to its highest Perfection. *Now we see as through a Glass darkly, but then face to face ; now we know in part, but*

then we shall know, even as we are known of Him, 1 Cor. 13. 12. For then we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is, 1 Joh. 3. 2. We shall live with Him, we shall behold His Glory, we shall enjoy His blessed Company ; we shall admire Him, and love Him, and praise Him for ever.

From the Premises thus briefly laid down ; I may conclude this plain Discourse as St Peter concludes his second Epistle to all Christians, Ye therefore, Beloved, seeing ye know these Things before ; beware lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own stedfastness ; but grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be Glory both now and for ever, Amen.

SERMON VIII.

I P E T. ii. 5.

Ye also, as lively Stones, are built up a Spiritual House, an Holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to GOD by Jesus Christ.

WHEN the Lord, the Lord GOD Omnipotent, had by the Word of his Power commanded all things out of nothing, it is written, *That GOD saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good*, Gen. 1. 31. Every thing was just as He would have it, exactly fitted to the Ends and Uses for which He design'd it ; and therefore it was very good in his Sight, or He was much pleased with it. And so He hath been ever since with all things in Heaven, except the Apostate Angels ; every thing else moving and acting there continually according to his Will and Pleasure. Neither is there any thing that He
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hath made upon Earth, but what is very good in his Eyes, so that He is infinitely pleased with it, except Mankind ; who being fall'n from their first Estate, are so far from being very good, that they are very bad in the Sight of GOD, as bad as bad can be : For it is written, *That GOD saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart, was only Evil continually.* Gen. 6. 5. This is the Case of Man in general, even of all Mankind, from first to last. There never was a mere Man from the Fall to this Day, that was every way such as GOD made him : And therefore never one, that did any one thing that in it self was perfectly good in the sight of GOD, and so pleasing or acceptable unto him. But the whole Race of Mankind being corrupted in all the Faculties of their Souls and Members of their Bodies, and always therefore acting irregularly and contrary to the Will of GOD, He is alway displeased with them, and with every thing they think, or speak, or do of themselves, or by their own natural Powers. So that he might justly have condemn'd them all to the same everlasting Fire, *that is prepar'd for the Devil and his Apostate Angels.* And would certainly have done it, but that He knew how to advance the Glory of his Good-

Goodness and Truth in restoring them to a Capacity of pleasing him again, and enabling them accordingly to do so, if they will, and to be willing also to do it.

This is a Mystery that is beyond the Reach of human Understanding. Neither could any Man have thought it possible, if GOD had not reveal'd it in his holy Word. But now that we have His Word for it, we have surer Grounds to believe it, than we have to believe any thing that we ourselves can understand. From whence we may see how much we ought to value the Holy Scriptures; and likewise, how far the Christian exceeds all other Religions. For, tho' all sorts of People profess some kind of Religion, whereby they hope to please the GOD they worship; yet none have any sure Ground to believe they worship the true GOD, nor to hope that he will be pleased with what they do, but only they who believe the Holy Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament to be given by his Inspiration: Which seeing none but Christians do, none but they can be ever certain that any thing they do is pleasing unto GOD. But they may be certain of it, and ought to be so, in that they have the way and manner how to do it, most plainly reveal'd to them by GOD himself in many Places of his Holy Scriptures, and particularly

cularly in that which I have now read.

The Apostle writes this Epistle to the Elect or Saints of GOD. And having in the first Chapter put them in mind, how they became such, even by being born again by the Word of GOD, *ver. 21.* In this he adviseth them as *new born Babes to desire the sincere Milk of the same Word*, that as they were born, *so they may grow by it. ver. 2.* If so be, saith he, *ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. ver. 3.* For if they had once tasted of it, as be sure they had, they could not but long for more of the Grace of Christ: Here call'd the Lord, as appears from the following Words, *To whom coming, as unto a living Stone; disallow'd indeed of Men, but chosen of GOD, and precious, ye also as lively Stones are built up a spiritual House.* For the Church being wholly built upon Christ, and all our Hopes of Salvation depending upon Him; for the better strengthening and confirming our Faith in Him, He is often spoken of in Holy Writ, under the Name and Notion of a Rock or Stone. *Behold, saith GOD by the Prophet, I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner Stone, a sure Foundation; he that believeth in him, shall not make haste, or be confounded. Isa. 28. 16. Rom. 9. 33. And, the Stone, saith David,*
which

which the Builders refused, is become the Head of the Corner. Psal. 118. 22. For that this Stone is Christ, appears from the many Places in the New Testament, where these Words are apply'd to him, Not only by his Apostle, *Acts* 4. 11. *1 Pet.* 2. 7. but by Christ himself. *Matth.* 21. 42. *Mark* 12. 10. *Luke* 20. 17. And to this the Apostle alludes in this very place, saying, *Unto whom coming as to a living Stone, disallow'd indeed of Men, but chosen of GOD, and precious;* which is the same in effect with his being *refused of the Builders, but chosen of GOD to be the Head of the Corner.* The Corner or Foundation Stone upon which the whole Fabrick resteth. *For other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,* *1 Cor.* 3. 11.

But the Apostle here calls him a *living Stone*, to shew that this is only a Metaphorical Expression; denoting his Firmness and Stability, together with the great Need there is of Him in erecting the House here spoken of: But that He is not such a *Stone* as those we see upon Earth, that are all without Sense and Life, but a *living Stone*, a Stone that hath Life in it self, and gives Life to all that come unto Him, and are built upon Him. And therefore the Apostle having said, *To whom coming as to a living Stone;* he adds, *Ye also as lively,* or rather

rather as living *Stones*, are built up a *spiritual House*. He is such a living Stone himself, that he makes them also who come unto him, to be so. Who therefore as such are built up a *Spiritual House*: An *House of GOD*, a *Temple*, wherein the living *GOD* himself is pleased to dwell; According to that of the Apostle to the Saints at *Corinth*, *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of GOD, and that the Spirit of GOD dwelleth in you?* 1 Cor. 3. 16. Chap. 6. 19. And to those at *Ephesus*, *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and of the Household of GOD. And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone. In whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an Habitation of GOD through the Spirit*, Eph. 2. 19. &c. Whence we see, that the whole Communion of Saints, the Body of Christ, are the spiritual House spoken of in my Text; *the House of GOD, or his Habitation*, by reason of his Spirit dwelling in them. And therefore they are all of the same Household, the *Household of GOD*, as it is here call'd: And elsewhere, *the Household of Faith*, Gal. 6. 10. Because it is by Faith that

that they are built upon Christ the Foundation of this House. Hence it is that they are all advised to *build up* one another in *their most holy Faith*. *Jud. 20.* And the Apostle often speaks of *edifying* the Church, *edifying the Body of Christ*, *edifying one another in Love*; that *all things may be done to edifying*, and the like. All which Expressions have Relation to this spiritual House, denoting the Necessity of our being edify'd or built up in Faith and Love, so that we may be real Parts of it, and grow up into a Holy Temple in the Lord.

But in every Temple of the Lord, it is necessary that there be likewise a Priesthood to offer Sacrifices suitable to such a Temple. And so there is here. For the Apostle having said, that the Saints are a *spiritual House* or Temple, he adds, That they are also an *holy Holy Priesthood*. As they are the *living Stones* of which this Temple is composed and consisteth, so they are likewise all of the Order of Priesthood; an *holy Priesthood*, proper for such an House where the most holy GOD resideth. This was first revealed in the Old Testament, where GOD said, *his People should be unto him a Kingdom of Priests*, *Exod. 19. 6.* A Kingdom wherein all the Subjects are both Kings and Priests : Or as St. Peter a little after

after my Text expresseth it, *a Royal Priesthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And how they come to be so, we learn from St. *John*, saying, *That Jesus Christ hath made us Kings and Priests to GOD and the Father*, Rev. 1. 6. Chap. 5. 10. As he gives his Saints a Kingdom, so he consecrates them all to be Priests; not such as were under the Law, when the Priesthood was confined to one Family, and offered up only carnal Sacrifices; but they are *an holy Priesthood*, ordain'd to offer up *spiritual Sacrifices*, acceptable to GOD by *Jesus Christ*.

For the Understanding of which Words it will be necessary to consider, what Sacrifices they are which the Saints offer up to GOD; wherefore they are call'd spiritual Sacrifices: and that these spiritual Sacrifices are acceptable to GOD by *Jesus Christ*.

First therefore, a Sacrifice in general is properly something that we give or offer to GOD for our own. For tho' we have nothing but what He first gives to us, yet when He hath given it to us, we have a civil Right to it; it is our own in respect of all other Men. But when we give it back again to GOD, divesting our selves of our own Right to it, and transferring it wholly to Him, then he looks upon it as a Sacrifice offer'd up to Him, and is plea-

pleased to accept of it as such. Under the Law, GOD commanded, that Oxen and Sheep, and Lambs, and such like living Creatures, should be offer'd up in Sacrifice to Him, which being kill'd by a Priest, were consum'd either by Fire upon the Altar, or else by those who waited at it, and so were fed as it were at GOD's Table, of such things as were offer'd to Him. But these Sacrifices being ordain'd only to foreshew and typifie the *Lamb of GOD that taketh away the Sins of the World*, they ceased in course, when *He had offer'd up Himself as a Sacrifice for our Sins upon the Cross*. But now under the Gospel, other kind of Sacrifices are requir'd of us. We are now commanded to *present our Bodies as a living Sacrifice*, Rom. 12. 1. Not to kill them, but to offer them up a-live, as a *living Sacrifice*, by devoting our selves wholly to the Service of GOD ; by *mortifying our Members that are upon the Earth*, Col. 3. 5. and *crucifying the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. By keeping our Bodies under, and bringing them into Subjection to our Souls ; by subduing our Passions ; *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present World*, Tit. 2. 12.

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Hence

Hence all manner of good, pious, and charitable Works, that are done in Obedience to God, and for His Service and Honour, are now call'd Sacrifices. As where the Apostle saith, That the Things which the *Philipians* sent him, were *an O-dour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing unto GOD*, Phil. 4. 18. And to do good, saith he, *and to communicate forget not : For with such Sacrifices GOD is well pleased*, Heb. 13. 16.

Indeed under the Law it self, these were reckoned the best sort of Sacrifices, and preferr'd before those that were ordained in the Ceremonial Law. *Behold*, saith Samuel, *to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of Rams*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. *The Sacrifices of GOD*, saith David, *are a broken Spirit : a broken and a contrite Heart, O GOD, thou wilt not despise*, Psal. 51. 17. *Wherewithal*, saith the Prophet, *shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high GOD ? Shall I come before him with burnt Offerings, and Calves of a Year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl ! Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression ? The fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul ? He hath shewed thee, O Man,*

Man, what is good : And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy G O D, Mic. 6. 6, 7, 8.

There are many such places in the old Testament where this is so plainly reveal'd, that the Scribe who talk'd with our Saviour, could not but own, That for a Man to love G O D *with all his Heart, and his Neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt Offerings and Sacrifices,* Mark 12. 33.

But Sacrificing in general, being a publick owning of G O D and his Sovereignty over the World, whereby we openly testify our Acknowledgement and Belief, that He is the Almighty Creator, Possessor and Governor of all Things, and that we are obliged to Him for all the Blessings we enjoy ; therefore by the Sacrifices which are here said to be offer'd by the Holy Priesthood spoken of in my Text, such Duties seem to be more especially understood, whereby we now set forth the Glory of G O D, by joyning together in making our publick Profession of our Dependance upon Him, and our manifold Obligations to Him.

Particularly our open or publick Praying to Him, and to Him alone, for all the good

U 2

Things

Things that we want. For hereby we plainly discover that we believe him to be the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift : That we neither have nor can have any thing but what we receive from him : And that he is so just and true to his Word, that he will give us whatsoever he knows to be good for us, *if we ask it of Him according to His Will.* And therefore under the Law it self, their publick Prayers always went along with their daily Sacrifices both Morning and Evening, and were performed at the same time, even while the Lamb was roasting upon the Altar. And this was it self also reckoned as a Sacrifice offer'd up to GOD. *Let my Prayer, saith David, be set forth before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my Hands as the Evening Sacrifice.* Psal. 141. 2.

Especially considering that Prayer always was, and ought to be accompanied with Praise and Thanksgiving to GOD, which is so properly a Sacrifice, that it is often call'd by that Name. *I will offer,* saith David, *to thee the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.* Psal. 116. 17. *And let them Sacrifice the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and declare his Works with rejoycing or singing,* Psal. 107. 22. And this even in those Days was more acceptable unto GOD, than

than all their other Sacrifices. *I will praise the Name of GOD, saith he, with a Song, and will magnifie him with Thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an Ox or Bullock that bath horns and hoofs.* Psal. 69. 30, 31. The Apostle also, to shew that this is properly an Evangelical Sacrifice, such as *S^t Peter* speaks of in my Text, saith, *By him therefore, even by Christ, let us offer the Sacrifice of praise to GOD continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name,* Heb. 13. 15.

But the Sacrifice that is most proper and peculiar to the Gospel, is the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, instituted by our Lord himself, to succeed all the bloody Sacrifices in the *Mosaick Law*.

For tho' we cannot say, as some absurdly do, that this is such a Sacrifice whereby Christ is again offer'd up to GOD both for the Living and the Dead; yet it may as properly be call'd a Sacrifice as any that was ever offered, except that which was offer'd by Christ Himself. For his indeed was the only true expiatory Sacrifice that was ever offer'd. Those under the Law, were only Types of his: And were called Sacrifices only upon that account, because they typified and represented that which he was to offer for the

Sins of the World. And therefore the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, may as well be called by that Name as they were. They were Typical, and this is a commemorative Sacrifice. They fore-shewed the Death of Christ to come: This shews forth his Death as already past. *For as often, saith the Apostle, as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death, till he come.* 1 Cor. 11. 26. This is properly our Christian Sacrifice, which neither *Jews* nor *Gentiles* can have any share in; As the Apostle observes; *We have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the Tabernacle.* Heb. 13. 10. An Altar, where we partake of the great Sacrifice which the Eternal Son of GOD offer'd up for the Sins of the whole World, and ours among the rest; That Almighty GOD may be reconciled to us, and receive us again into his Love and Favour, and make us happy in the Enjoyment of it for ever. Which is so great a Blessing, that they who really mind their own Good and Welfare, can no more forbear to partake of this Sacrament when they may, than they can forbear to eat when they are hungry, and have Meat before them.

These

These are those Spiritual Sacrifices which the Holy Priesthood, or whole Body of Saints, offer up to GOD. The Apostle calls them *Spiritual*, in opposition to those *Carnal Sacrifices* that were offer'd by the *Levitical Priesthood*. And because they are of a Spiritual Nature, and performed in a Spiritual Manner, being offer'd up in the Spirits of the Saints as well as Bodies : And by the Spirit of GOD himself, dwelling in them, and so consecrating them a *Spiritual House, an holy Priesthood*, and enabling them to offer up these Sacrifices in the Name of Christ, and through the Merits of that Sacrifice which he hath offer'd for them : According to that of the Apostle in the place before quoted, by him *therefore let us offer up the Sacrifice of praise to GOD continually*. It is by him only that they can be offer'd up so as to be acceptable unto GOD. And when they are offer'd up by him, they can be acceptable unto GOD no otherwise than by him too. As we are here taught by the Apostle, saying, That these *Spiritual Sacrifices* are *acceptable to GOD by Jesus Christ*.

All that I have hitherto discoursed upon these Words, being only in order to clear the way for that which I chiefly design'd in the choice of them, even to shew how our Spiritual Sacrifices come to be accep-

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table to GOD by Jesus Christ (to our unspeakable comfort); I shall now by his Assistance search into the bottom of it, and lay it as open as I can. For which purpose we may first observe, that, by the *Levitical Law*, when a Man brought an Offering to the Lord, of his Flock or his Herd; the Priest was to burn it all upon the Altar, and then it was said to be a burnt Sacrifice, an Offering made by Fire, of a sweet Savour unto the Lord. Levit. i. 9, 13. &c. What we translate, sweet Savour, in the *Hebrew* is, ריח ניחוח, a Smell of Rest. Such a Smell, whereby GOD rested satisfied with the Sacrifice from whence it came, instead of the Death of the Offerer, or such Punishment as was due unto him for his Sins. But he was first to put his hand upon the head of his burnt Offering: And then, the Text saith, it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him, v. 4. The Death of the Sacrifice was accepted of instead of the Death which he must otherwise have suffer'd for his Sin. So that GOD was thereby atoned or reconciled to him, and well pleased again with him, as much as if he had not sinned. Not by any Virtue in the Beast that was killed and burnt, but by reason of the Typical Relation it had to the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, whereby

whereby he offer'd up himself in our stead and so to make atonement, or propitiation for our Sins.

Now as the Apostle in my Text calls our Devotions and good Works by the Name of *Sacrifices*, so he asserts them to be acceptable to G O D, as the Legal Sacrifices were. St Paul expresseth the same thing in the very Words of the Law, saying, That the good Works of the *Philippians* were *an Odour of a sweet smell*. And then he explains it, by adding, that they were *a Sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to G O D*. Phil. 4. 18. And so all the good Works that we sincerely perform in Obedience to the Will of G O D, altho' they are not absolutely perfect in themselves, yet he accepts of them as much as if they were, and is as well pleased with them, and with him that doth them. He looks upon them as good Works, such as he would have us do, and accordingly rewards us for them, by giving us those great Blessings which he hath freely promised to those who obey and serve him. Thus therefore our Spiritual Sacrifices are here said to be acceptable to G O D. But not for any worth or value in themselves, but by Jesus Christ. To understand this, we must consider,

I. There

S E R M O N VIII.

1. There is nothing which we do, that is acceptable or well-pleasing to G O D in it self. For GOD is pleased with nothing but what is exactly agreeable to his own Will. But nothing that we do is so in all points. But do what we can, we still fail either in the Matter, or in the Manner, or in the End, or in some Circumstance or other. So that, as the wise Man observes, *there is not a just Man, that doth good and sinneth not.* Eccl. 7. 20. not only, that always doth good, and never sins : But that doth not sin in the good he doth, by not doing it as he ought in all respects. But nothing is good, that is not all good: without any failure or defect in it. Which seeing nothing we do, is : Therefore nothing we do, can be of it self acceptable to him, *who is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity,* any Iniquity, without Abhorrence and Indignation.

In the next place we may observe, that as all our Spiritual Sacrifices are thus unclean in the sight of G O D, so it is not in the Power of any or all the Creatures in the World to cleanse them, so as to make them acceptable to him, without Christ. Neither is there Salvation in any other. *For there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* Act. 4. 12. Whereby we can be
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saved from the Wrath of GOD, which is due to every Sin or Transgression of his Law, one as well as another; to the Defects and Imperfections of our best Actions, as well as to the worst that we ever did, or ever can do.

And therefore Christ himself saith, *That without him, we can do nothing.* Joh. 15. 5. Nothing that is truly good: Nothing that GOD will accept of, without him. Infomuch that without him, our whole Lives are but as one continued Sin and Provocation against him, in whom we live. As they who do not believe in him, will one day find by woful experience, notwithstanding all their pretensions to Vertue and good Works. For whatsoever they may pretend, they can neither exercise any one Vertue, nor do any one Work that can be properly termed Good, and therefore acceptable to GOD, without Christ.

But by him St Peter here saith, that our *Spiritual Sacrifices are acceptable to GOD*: And so doth St Paul too, where he saith, that *we are accepted in the beloved.* Eph. 1. 6. In Him, of whom GOD the Father said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am pleased.* Matt. 3. 17. *ch.* 17. 5. This was proclaimed by a Voice from Heaven upon two several Occasions, at his

his Baptism, and at his Transfiguration; the better to assure us, that He is the beloved Son in whom GOD is pleased to manifest his Love and Favour to Mankind: That as *the Law was given by Moses, Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* Joh. 1. 17. Grace: All the Grace and Mercy that we receive from GOD, comes by Him. Particularly that whereby He is graciously pleased to accept of any thing that we Sinful Mortals do. And therefore in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the Apostle prays, That GOD *would make them perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.* Heb. 13. 21. It is only through him that GOD enables to do good Works; and it is only through Him, that the good Works we do are well-pleasing unto GOD,

But how this comes to pass, that what we do, should be acceptable to GOD by another, even by Jesus Christ, is a Mystery which the Angels desire to look into, and the more they look the more they Admire; And so shall we, if we do but cast our Eye upon what is revealed of it in GOD's holy Word. Where we find,

1. That this Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son of GOD, of one Substance with the Father, and that in the fulness of Time, he
took

took upon him the Form or Nature of Man, so as to be in One and the Same Person both GOD and Man; Man in general. Not only a particular human Person as every one of us is, but as the *first Man Adam* was, one in whom the whole Nature of Man is contain'd. Who therefore is called also the *Second Man*. 1 Cor. 15. 47. and *Adam*, that is, Man in general, as the *First* was, v. 45. But with this mighty Advantage, that the *First* was only Man: The *Second*, not only Man, but GOD too. GOD of the same Nature with the Father, as well as Man of the same Nature with all other Men.

2. We there find, that as the *First Man Adam*, and in him all Mankind broke the Law of GOD; so the *Second* kept it perfectly, never doing any one thing that was there Forbidden, nor leaving any one thing undone that was there Commanded. But he went about continually doing Good, and fulfilling all Righteousness. So that his whole Life as Man, was one continued Act of Obedience to the Will of GOD. Which being performed by him in the whole Nature of Man, was as much as was required of all that are of that Nature, and more too. Forasmuch as no more was or could be required of all Mankind than the Obedience of so many Finite

nite Creatures ; Whereas his was the Obedience of a Person that is Infinite ; and therefore infinitely surpassing all that could ever have been done by the whole Race of Mankind.

3. We there also find, that He was thus obedient not only through the whole course of his Life, but to Death it self, *even the Death of the Cross.* Phil. 2. 8. He did not only suffer that accursed Death, but he suffer'd it in perfect Obedience to the Will of G O D. But Death being due only for Sin, he never having sinned, could not suffer it for himself. But as he suffer'd it in the Nature of Man, so he suffer'd it for all that are of that Nature. And therefore he is there said to have died for us, and for our Sins : To have *tasted Death for every Man.* Heb. 2. 9. and *to have given himself a Ransom for all.* 1 Tim. 2. 6. For all of that Nature in which he died. So that his Death was a sufficient Price for the Redemption of all Mankind ; It being equivalent to the Death of all Men ; And of infinitely greater Worth and Value, in that it was the Death of an Infinite Person.

4. We there find also that this Divine Person, having thus suffer'd Death in the Nature of Man, he in that rose again, went up into Heaven, and is there exalted

ted at the Right hand of GOD, to be the *Mediator between G O D and Men*, in whose Nature he is now there, appearing in the Presence of GOD for us. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 9. 24. *As the Propitiation for our Sins, and for the Sins of the whole World,* 1 Joh. 2. 2. *And is able to save to the utmost all that come unto G O D by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Heb. 7. 25.

Lastly, we find in holy Writ, that they who believe in this Jesus Christ, are said to *be in him, to abide in him*, as a Member in the Body or a Branch in a Tree, and so to *partake of him*. Heb. 3. 14. of all he did and suffer'd upon Earth, and of all he is now doing in Heaven: Where He looks upon them as His own, His Disciples, His Servants, His Friends, His Brethren, His Sheep, His peculiar People; and accordingly takes particular care of them, as their Saviour, their Mediator and Advocate with the Father, interceding continually for them, and for them only. *I pray for them*, saith he, *I pray not for the World, but for them, which thou hast given me, for they are thine.* Joh. 17. 9.

Now these things being thus briefly laid down together, we may easily see, how the *Spiritual Sacrifices* which the *Spiritual House* and *Holy Priesthood* here spoken of,
offer

offer unto GOD, come to be acceptable to Him by Jesus Christ. For this Spiritual House being wholly made up of such as come to Christ, and believe on Him, as we learn from the Context, v. 4, 6, 7. Therefore they are all built up in him, as St Peter here saith, or as St Paul expresseth it ; In him they are builded together, for an habitation of GOD through the Spirit. Eph. 2. 22. So that they have a near Relation to Him, and an Interest in Him, and He in them : They are wholly His ; and are actuated and influenc'd by that Holy Spirit that proceeds from Him, as the Members of a Body are by the Animal Spirits that flow from the Head. Rom. 8. 9, 13, 14. It is by this the Spirit of Christ, and so by Christ himself that they offer all their Spiritual Sacrifices, and do all the good Works that are required of them : According to that of the Apostle, I can do all things through Christ that strengtneth me. Phil. 4. 13. But what is done by Christ or his Holy Spirit, is done by GOD Himself. And so far as any thing is done by himself, so far be sure he is well pleas'd with it, as He is with every thing which He Himself doth. This therefore is one Reason wherefore the Spiritual Sacrifices, which His People offer are acceptable to GOD by
Jesus

Jesus Christ, because they are offer'd by Him, in whom G O D is well-pleased.

But although they be thus led by the Spirit of Christ, yet while they are in the Body, the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit; so that do what they can, there are many Blemishes and Imperfections in their best Sacrifices, which would hinder their being acceptable unto G O D, if Christ did not cover them with his own Sacrifice. But He having offer'd up Himself as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World, by Vertue of that, He makes Atonement and Reconciliation for all the Sins of those who believe in Him, and particularly for the Imperfections of their Duties and Performances : For which He Himself hath born the Punishments, and therefore intercedes, That G O D would not be angry or displeas'd with them : But be graciously pleased to accept of the imperfect Sacrifices which they offer Him, for the sake of that absolutely perfect Sacrifice which He himself had offer'd in their stead. And hence it is that Almighty G O D having His Sacrifice always in His Eye, overlooks the Imperfections of theirs, and accepts of what they do, through the Merits of that Death which His only Begotten Son hath suffer'd for them.

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But that nothing might be wanting to render the good Works which his Servants do by his Assistance, as acceptable to GOD through Him, as it is possible for them to be, he doth not only wash out their spots with His Blood, but he adorns them also with his own Righteousness, that perfect Righteousness which he fulfill'd through the whole course of his Life. For that also being, as we have seen, perform'd in the whole Nature of Man, and therefore applicable to all that are of that Nature, he accordingly applies it to all that by Faith come unto Him for it. As all His faithful People be sure do : As well as St Paul, when he desired to *be found in Christ, not having his own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ : The Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith.* Phil. 3. 9. Where we see, he desired and accordingly had another Righteousness besides that of the Law, the Righteousness which is through the Faith of Christ, *who knew no Sin, and yet was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him.* 2 Cor. 5. 21. *Who of GOD was made unto us Righteousness as well as Wisdom.* 1 Cor. 1. 30. *The Lord our Righteousness.* Jer. 23. 6. So that we may

may every one say, *Surely in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength.* Isa. 45. 24. *Strength* to do good Works, and *Righteousness* to make them acceptable when they are done. As they may well be : Seeing it is the Righteousness of GOD Himself, who is well-pleased with every thing that He himself doth, and with nothing else.

From hence therefore we may see, how the Sacrifices which his People offer come to be acceptable to GOD by Jesus Christ, even because they are offer'd by the Assistance of His Holy Spirit : Cleansed by the Merits of the Death He suffer'd in their stead, and perfected by the Righteousness which He himself performed in their Nature. And being begun, continued and finished in and by himself, he looks upon them as his own Works, and is therefore well-pleas'd with them, as he was with every Thing He made at first ; when it was said, *That GOD saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good.*

Now what a mighty Encouragement is this to do all the good we can in the World? For who would not please Him that governs all Things in it, and disposeth of every thing as He himself

pleaseth ! And yet we see, that we little, we sinful Creatures upon Earth, may do such Things as are acceptable and well-pleasing to the Great GOD of Heaven, though not in themselves, yet by His only Begotten Son Jesus Christ. But for that purpose we must do all such good Works as He hath set us. And whatsoever we do in Word or Deed, we must do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Believing and trusting on Him to perfume it with the Incense of his Ointments, that so it may be acceptable to GOD by Him. And then it will most certainly be so. For we have the Word of GOD Himself here for it : As we have now heard. And therefore when we have offer'd any Sacrifice, or performed any Service to Him, we ought not to doubt, but be fully persuaded in our Minds, that although there be no Merit, but many Imperfections in it, yet that GOD is Graciously pleas'd to accept of it, and will accordingly reward us for it, both in this World and the next, thro' the Merits and Mediation of his Son Jesus Christ : To whom be Glory for ever.

SERMON IX.

A C T S, xiii. 3.

*And when they had fasted and pray'd, and
laid their Hands on them, they sent them
away.*

IT is our great Happiness that we live in so pure and sincere a Part of Christ's Holy Catholick Church, that as we have nothing superfluous, so neither is there any thing wanting that can any way conduce to our Eternal Salvation in it, much less any thing that is necessary in order thereunto: As, amongst other things, the right Ordination of those who administer the Means of Grace, must needs be acknowledged to be; for seeing we can have no Grace or Power to do Good, but what is derived to us from GOD, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the Use of the Means which he hath establish'd in his Church for that Purpose; unless those

Means be rightly and duly administred, they lose their Force and Energy, and so can never attain the End, wherefore they were established. Neither is there any thing more necessary to the right Administration of the Means of Grace, than that they who administer them be rightly ordain'd and authoris'd to do it, according to the Institution and Command of him that did establish them. For seeing they do not work naturally, but only by Vertue of the Institution and Promise annexed to it; unless that be duly observed, we have no Ground to expect that the Promise should be performed, nor by consequence that they should be effectual to the Purposes for which they are used.

And certainly there neither is, nor ever was any Provincial or National Church upon Earth, wherein the Institution of Christ and his Holy Apostles in this Particular, hath been more punctually observed, than it is in ours. For as the Bishops and Pastors of our Church have by a successive Imposition of Hands continued all along from the Apostles, receiv'd the same Spirit which Christ breathed into them for the effectual Administration of the Word and Sacraments; so do they after the same manner confer the same Spirit upon others even by laying their Hands upon them, according
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to the Institution of Christ made known and confirmed to us by the Practice of his Apostles and Catholick Church in all Ages since. And herein it is that the Essence of Ordination doth properly consist. Neither doth our Church thus strictly observe this Institution by using this Apostolical Imposition of Hands upon such Occasions in general only, but likewise she useth the same Means and Methods that the Apostles did, for the preparing those whom she intends to ordain for the receiving the Holy Ghost by such Imposition of Hands, and for the more effectual obtaining it for them. For which Purpose she appoints certain Seasons every Year for this great Work, and requires that all her Members joyn together at these Times in Fasting and Prayer to Almighty GOD for his Direction of the Bishops who shall then ordain, and for His Grace and Heavenly Benediction upon those who shall be then ordained to any Holy Function. And that this is exactly agreeable to the Practice of the Holy Apostles in this Case, is plain from these Words, *And when they had fasted and pray'd, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away.* They first fasted and prayed, and then laid their Hands on them.

The Occasion of the Words in brief was this. There were in the Church of *Antioch*, five Persons eminent for the Gift of Prophefying and Teaching, and as they were on a certain time together, fasting and praying, and ministering to the Lord, the Holy Ghost either by Inspiration, they being Prophets, or by some particular Revelation said to them, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul, two of the Company, for the Work whereunto I have called them.* From whence we may observe, how necessary it is that they who are admitted to the sacred Ministry of the Gospel, be externally as well as internally call'd, and publicly ordained to it by the Church. *Saul* was called before by Christ Himself, and both He and *Barnabas* were Prophets Divinely Inspired, and yet for all that, they must be outwardly called and ordained by the Church too, before they could be sent out to preach the Gospel. Yea, the Holy Ghost and so GOD Himself commands it, who at the same time that he commanded them to be separated or ordained by the Church, could if He had pleas'd have come upon them without the Imposition of Hands, or the Ministry of any Men. But howsoever to keep up the Order which Christ hath established in his Church, He only signifies his Pleasure that He would have them ordain'd,

dain'd, and then those Prophets and Teachers, which are supposed to have been some Bishops or Pastors in and about *Antioch*, must lay their Hands upon them, that so they might by that Means receive the Holy Ghost and Power to administer the Word and Sacraments. Which is a full and undeniable Argument for the Necessity of Persons being solemnly and publickly ordain'd by the Imposition of Hands, before they undertake to minister in the Church, whatsoever Gifts or Parts, or inward Calling they pretend to. For none certainly could ever pretend to any inward Call to the Ministry more than *Paul* and *Barnabas* might: And yet it seems that would not serve their Turn, but they must be outwardly called and ordained by the Church too, before they presume to meddle with any Holy Function. And questionless the great Reason why this is so punctually described and recorded by the Holy Ghost in Scripture, was that all People might take Notice of it, and not expect that the Holy Ghost should ordain them Himself, when he would not ordain those Eminent Saints *Paul* and *Barnabas* Himself, but leaves them to the Church, and expressly commands them to be ordained by her. *Separate, saith he, Barnabas and Saul to the Work whereunto I have called them.* It seems

seems He Himself had call'd them to the Work, and yet for all that they must be ordained by Men, before they would enter upon it.

The Holy Ghost having thus commanded the Prophets and Teachers there present to separate these two Persons, it follows, *and when they had fasted and pray'd, and laid their Hands upon them, they sent them away.* From whence we may observe ;

1. That altho' the Holy Ghost said only, *separate me Barnabas and Saul*, they knew well enough what he meant by it, even that they should lay their Hands upon them, and so ordain or separate them *to the Work whereunto they were called.* Which plainly shews, that the Rite or Ceremony of laying Hands upon these who were to be set apart for the Work of the Ministry, was not only commonly known at that time, but looked upon as necessary to be observed; and that it was approved of by the Holy Ghost Himself, is manifest from the following words, for so soon as Hands were laid upon them, it is said, that *they were sent by the Holy Ghost.* v. 4.

2. We may observe hence that before they would lay their Hands upon *Barnabas and Saul*, they fasted and prayed. Which certainly is recorded on purpose for our imitation, that the Church in all Ages might

might follow so good an Example, and not lay Hands upon any Persons for the admitting them to any holy Function, untill that they have fasted and pray'd, as they here did.

Now we, in Imitation of this holy Example, and in Conformity to the Practice of the Catholick and Apostolick Church, being now assembled here upon the same Occasion, as these were, when they ordain'd *Barnabas* and *Saul*, even to fast and pray in order to the laying on of Hands upon Persons to be set apart for the Sacred Ministry of the Church, it may not be amiss if we consider a little how reasonable and necessary it is that we should do so. It is true, this one Instance is not only a sufficient Warrant for it, but it lays an Obligation upon us to do it. But howsoever, as we cannot imagine but they had great Reasons for it, so it must needs be very convenient to consider what they were, both to justify our present Assembling, and to excite those who are to be ordain'd, to a more serious Performance of these two great Duties of *Fasting* and *Prayer*, as preparatory to their Ordination.

First, as for *Fasting*, we shall soon acknowledge the great Use of that, in order to the fitting Persons for Ordination, if we do but consider how much it conduceth towards

wards an holy and good Life, and to the fitting and qualifying us for the Service of GOD in general, both in its own Nature, and by Virtue of the Promises which GOD hath made to it.

In what Sense Fasting in its self is one great Means of our being and doing good, we shall easily understand, if we do but consider two things.

I. That the Soul, the Seat of all Vertue and Goodness, altho' it be a distinct Substance from the Body, and so is capable of acting separately from it, even whilst it is in it, yet so long as it is ty'd to the Body, and actually informs it, so as to be but one Part of that Composition which we call Man, it ordinarily makes use of the Organs of the Body, especially of the Animal Spirits in all its Actions. And these only are properly call'd Human Actions, which are thus perform'd by the whole Man. Which therefore cannot but depend very much upon the Temper of the Body that concurs towards the Performance of them. As we find by daily Experience they do; for if our Bodies be out of Tune, so are our Minds too. If any thing affect our Heads, disturb our Brains, and so disorders the Animal Spirits, which the Soul makes use of in its Operations, they are likewise disorderly and irregular. As in Musick, tho'
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the Artift be never fo skilful, yet if his Inftrument be out of tune, there can be no Harmony or Melody, in what he plays upon it. Yea, none of us but may eafily obferve, that whatfoever Humour prevails moft in the Body, as Phlegm, Choller, Melancholly, or the like, our Actions are ufually tainted with it. Infomuch, that by them we may eafily difcover what that Humor is which is moft predominant. From whence it plainly appears, that fo long as the Soul is in the Body, altho' it was design'd to rule and govern it, yet it is apt to be govern'd by it, and to indulge and humor it fo far as to follow not its own Reafon and Judgment, but the more impetuous Inclinations of the fenfitive Part, altho' it be to its own Ruine and Deftitution.

2. Hence therefore it neceffarily follows in the next place, that Fasting and Abftinence cannot but conduce much to the Exercife of true Piety and Virtue, in that, if duly perform'd, it keeps the Body under, and brings it into Subjection to the Soul. By which Means, the Soul being kept always in its Throne, with full Power and Authority over its Subjects, the inferior Faculties, and being under no Reftraint from them, its Reafonings would be always clear, its Judgments found, its Coun-

Counsels deliberate; it would always act like its self, a rational and spiritual Substance, and so would be as free from all brutish and sensual Vices, as when separate from the Body which inclines it to them. And then it will begin to relish spiritual Objects as suitable to its own Nature. For it will look upon Vertue and Vice, not as they are falsely represented by the Imagination corrupted with the Humours of the Body, but as they are in themselves, and so discern clearly how lively and amiable the former is; how odious and detestable the latter, and by consequence exert all its Power to follow the one, and avoid the other.

To explain this more fully, I might descend to Particulars, and shew how Fasting and Abstinence, by keeping the Body under, doth of it self contribute very much to the mortifying of most Lusts, and to the quickning the contrary Graces in us. For which end, I need not instance in Gluttony and Drunkenness: For these being directly contrary, yea, contradictory to true Fasting, where this is rightly observ'd these Vices must needs cease of their own accord, and the contrary Virtues, of Temperance and Sobriety take their Places. The same may be said of Luxury and Uncleaness, for that proceeding only from too
great

great a Plenitude and Luxuriancy of Humours in the Body, if the Body be kept under, as it ought, we can have no Inclinations to such Vices as those.

But there are other Vices also which at first sight may seem more remote to our present Purpose, as not depending so much upon the Temper of the Body, and yet they also may be very much prevented or cur'd by Fasting. As for Example: Are we apt to be angry and peevish, to fret and be disturb'd at every little thing that happens, as many are? This commonly proceeds from immoderate Dyet, or constant Feeding to the full, which breeds abundance of Choller, and overheats the Animal Spirits, whereby they are apt to take fire, and be inflam'd at every thing that occurs contrary to our present Desires. But by Fasting and constant Abstinence, the Choller would be abated, the Spirits cooled, and so the Mind reduced to a sedate, meek and gentle Temper.

And so for Self-conceitedness, Covetousness, and such like Sins as proceed commonly from the Corruption of the Fancy caus'd by those malignant Humours, which by reason of overmuch eating, are exhaled from the Stomach into the Head, and there disturb the Imagination so as to represent things as in a magnifying Glass,
and

S E R M O N IX.

and make them seem what they are not, Great, and Good. Fasting prevents the very engendring of such Fumes, and by consequence, the Corruption of the Fancy by them. By which Means, the Mind is able to judge all things as they are, and so to see clearly that there is nothing in our selves that we can justly be proud of, nor in this World, that we can in reason desire or covet to make us happy.

And then on the other side, as it helps towards the suppressing of most Vices, so also towards the Exercise of Grace and Vertue, especially to the due Performance of our Devotions, whether publick or Private. For whence comes that Dulness? whence those Distractions which we commonly find at such times? whence, I say, come they, but from that Hurry of gross Vapours in the Brain, which obstruct its Passages, and crowd about it so disorderly, that the Soul cannot, without much Time and Pains, rally them together, and reduce them into such an Order, as to make any tolerable use of them? And therefore as these Distractions are caused by overmuch eating, so they may in a great Measure be cured by Fasting. Hence it is that none of us but may find by Experience, that we can never perform any spiritual Exercise with that Life and Vigour, with that Chear-

Chearfulness and Alacrity, with that constant Presence and composure of Mind, as when our Bodies are empty, and so kept under, as to be in due Subjection to the Soul.

I might instance in many other Particulars, whence to shew, how Fasting doth of it self contribute much to the Extirpation of most Vices, and to the planting and growth of true Vertue and Goodness in us. But most others depend upon, or may be referr'd to these already mention'd. And therefore there is the same Reason for them as there is for these ; so that we may justly conclude this with a remarkable Passage of *S^t Jerome*, in his Epistle to *Celantia*, where he saith ; That Fasting and Abstinence, *non castitati tantummodo, sed omnibus omnino virtutibus opitulatur.*

But the Great and Principal Reason of all, why it doth so, is still behind: And that is, because that Fasting is so pleasing and acceptable to Almighty GOD, that he hath promised a Blessing a Reward to it, whensoever it is rightly performed. And that too, not by the Mouth of a Prophet, an Apostle, an Angel, but by his own Divine Mouth, when he was here upon Earth. For our Lord himself saith, *When thou fastest, anoint thy Head, and wash thy Face, that thou appear not unto*
Y Men

Mento Fast, but to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly, Matt. 6. 18. From whence it is plain, that if a Man Fast, not out of a vain Ostentation to be seen of Men and thought Holy, but out of a sincere Design to keep his Body under, and so fit himself the better for the Service of G O D, that Man shall most certainly be rewarded for it. But what Reward shall he have? Why, G O D will bless and sanctify it to the great Ends and Purposes for which it is design'd. *Fasting* as I have shewn, doth conduce much to our being Holy, but it cannot make us so. That is only in the Power of G O D, the only Fountain of all true Grace and Holiness ; but he being well pleased with Fasting where it is duly performed, doth by his own Grace and Spirit make it effectual for the subduing our Lusts, and for the Performance of all Holy and Good Works.

For our better understanding of this we may consider, That altho' G O D can work either with Means or without Means, or by contrary Means, as he himself sees good, yet he ordinarily makes use of the most fit and proper Means that can be used, for the effecting of what he designs. And it is Presumption in us to expect

expect he should do otherwise. But *Fasting*, as we have seen already, is a very fit and proper Means, as of it self conducing much to a vertuous and good Life. And therefore they who give themselves to Fasting and Abstinence, as they ought to do, are always in GOD's way, using the proper Means for the obtaining of true Grace and Vertue. And so need not doubt but he will bestow it upon them. Whereas they who refuse or neglect such Means, have no more Ground to expect his Blessing and Assistance, than they have to expect that he should work Miracles for them.

And besides that, altho' the most high GOD, the chiefest, the only Good, be always ready, and free to communicate of himself, and to distribute the Graces of his Spirit, it is to those who are rightly disposed for the Receipt of them, whose Bodies as well as Souls are fitted for the Inhabitation of the Spirit, or as the Apostle words it, to be the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*. But certainly no Bodies are so fit and proper for so Divine a Guest, as those which by Fasting and Abstinence are kept in continual Subjection to the Soul. For it being the Soul that is primarily inspired, and sanctified by the Spirit, unless the Body be subject to the Soul, it will

not be subject to the Spirit that is in it, but the *Flesh will lust against the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 19. Whereas, if the Body be kept clean and pure, always at the Beck of the Soul, ready and willing to observe its Commands, then the Spirit that enlightens, actuates, and quickens the Soul, will with great Facility diffuse its Influences over the whole Man, so as to sanctify it throughout. For then the Body being subject to the Souls, and the Soul to the Spirit, as the Spirit is, so will the Soul and Body be in their Capacities pure and holy.

Hence it is, that the greatest Discoveries that GOD hath made of Himself to Men, and the most powerful Effects of the Spirit upon them, have usually been when they were Fasting, and so in a right Disposition for them. Thus *Moses was fasting forty days and forty nights*, even all the while that he was conversing with GOD upon Mount *Sinai*, and received the Law from Him. *Exod. 34. 28. Elias had fasted forty Days and forty Nights*, when GOD discoursed so familiarly with them upon Mount *Horeb*, 1 *King. 19. 8.* Our Lord himself also, tho' he had no need of it, his Body being always perfectly subject to his Soul, yet for our Example and Imitation, *fasted forty Days and forty Nights*, even all the while that He was in the Wilderness overcoming the

the Devil, and had the Angels to minister unto Him, *Matt. 4.* *Daniel* was *fasting* when the Angel *Gabriel* was sent to acquaint him with the precise Time of the *Messiah's* coming; *Dan. 9.* *Cornelius*, by whose Conversion the Door of Salvation was open'd to the *Gentiles*, he was also *Fasting*, when the Angel was sent to instruct him how to get to Heaven, *Act. 10.* 30. And to name no more, in this very Place where my Text is, the Disciples at *Antioch* were *fasting*, when the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner spake unto them saying, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work to which I have called them.* By all which it appears, that when Men are *Fasting*, and so their Bodies are subject to their Souls, then G O D takes the Opportunity of manifesting himself and his Pleasure to them, and also directing and assisting them in the way to Bliss. And by consequence, that *Fasting* is a Duty of greater moment than it is commonly thought to be.

Now these things being premised concerning *Fasting* in general, it is easie to conclude, that it is very reasonable at least, if not necessary, to fast upon such Occasions as these. For seeing that Abstinence and Fasting conduceth so much to the suppressing of Vice, and to the Exer-

cise of Vertue, to the correcting the Errors of our Fancies, and the Disorder of our Passions, to the quickning and invigorating our Devotions, and so to the more effectual obtaining the good things we want and desire at the hands of G O D ; it must needs be very requisite, that we and the whole Church joyn heartily and sincerely in it, when any Persons are to be admitted into Holy Orders, that so we may the more effectually implore the Grace and Favour of the All-wise G O D in guiding and governing the the Minds of His Servants, the Bishops and Pastors of His Flock, so that they may make choice of such Persons as He Himself knows to be fit to serve in the sacred Ministry of the Church, and in assisting those which shall be ordain'd with His own Grace and Benediction, that both by their Life and Doctrine they may set forth His Glory, and set forward the Salvation of all Men, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

And as for those who are to be ordained to any Holy Function, nothing certainly can be more necessary than for them to bring their Bodies by *Fasting* and *Abstinence* into a due Subjection to their Minds, that so they may be rightly prepared and disposed for these great Blessings

sings we pray for, and particularly for the receiving the Holy Ghost, which shall be conferr'd upon them at their Ordination. That there be no Obstacle or Impediment in themselves, but they may be ready both in Soul and Body, to receive not only Power and Authority to Administer the Word and Sacraments, but likewise such Aids and Assistances of the Holy Spirits, whereby they may be enabled to do it carefully, sincerely, effectually.

And this seems to be the Reason, why the Disciples here Fasted both before and at the Ordination of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. For before they ordained them or so much as had pitch'd upon whom to ordain, they fasted, for it is said, *As they Ministred to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul.* From whence it seems very probable, that the Church being very much enlarged, found it necessary at this time to encrease the Number of their Pastors, and not knowing whom to choose, they set apart some time for Fasting and Prayer to Almighty G O D, that He would be pleased to direct them in it, who accordingly did so. For as they were thus *Ministring* to Him, and *Fasting*, the Holy Ghost said, *separate me Barnabas and Saul.* Now what they did then, we are now doing. It is upon

the same Account that we are now ministering to the Lord, and fasting. And altho' we have no Ground to expect any such immediate Revelation as they had, yet if we do but perform this Duty as sincerely as they did, there can be no doubt but that Almighty GOD will hear our Prayers as well as theirs, and direct the Bishops and Pastours of our Church, as he did them, to choose such Persons as he himself approves of, and would have ordain'd to the Ministry of His Church.

Neither did they think it enough to fast before, in order to their making a good Choice of Persons to be Ordain'd, but they fasted again at the very time when they Ordain'd these, which by the Direction of the Holy Ghost they had made choice of for the Purposes aforesaid, even for the more effectual obtaining the Spirit for them, and for the better fitting and qualifying of them for the receiving of it; which therefore I humbly conceive is very convenient, if not necessary to be observ'd by us too.

But here we may further take notice, that as they fasted, so they pray'd too at the same time. Which two Duties are frequently put together. *Daniel* and *Cornelius* beforemention'd, were fasting and praying when the Angel came to them. Our
Lord

Lord tells, *There are some kind of Devils that cannot be cast out but by Fasting and Praying.* And to come nearer to our present Purpose, *when St. Paul and Barnabas had ordain'd them Elders in every Church, and had fasted with Praying,* saith St. Luke, Acts 14. 23. From whence it appears that they ordained others after the same manner as they themselves were ordain'd, even with Fasting and Praying. And doubtless, the same Course ought always to be taken in conferring Orders, not only for the Example of the Holy Apostles, tho' that would be sufficient, but likewise from the Reason of the thing. For Fasting upon this Occasion, is chiefly design'd for the fixing our Thoughts, for the exciting our Affections, and for the disposing our Minds the better, to pray and supplicate the Divine Majesty, for His Direction in the Choice of fit Persons to be ordain'd, and for His Blessing upon them whom they have ordain'd to any holy Function. For which Purpose, no better Means can be used than Prayer joyned with Fasting. For tho' the effectual fervent Prayer of the Righteous, of its self availeth much, when it is joyn'd with Fasting, it availeth more. As our Lord himself plainly intimates in the Passage before cited, where he saith, *That such Devils are not cast out but by Prayer*

Prayer and Fasting together. Some kind of Devils may be cast out by Prayer without Fasting, but none can withstand them when they go together. And the Reason seems to be, because Fasting is not only of it self acceptable to GOD, but also because, by Fasting our Bodies being kept under, our Hearts will rise higher, and our Minds be more intent, our Affections more pure, and our Desires more earnest, and by consequence, our Prayers more effectual and prevalent with Almighty GOD, for His granting the good Things we pray for.

Especially, they who are to be ordain'd, must be sure not only to fast, but to pray too. And as the Church prays for them, so they must pray for themselves too, that GOD would vouchsafe to bestow his Spirit upon them. And that He will do it if sincerely desir'd, we have the Word* of Christ Himself for it, saying, *If ye then being evil, know how to give good things to your Children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13. Which we see exactly verify'd in my Text, for *Saul and Barnabas* having fasted and prayed, and receiv'd Imposition of Hands, it presently follows, that *they were sent forth by the Holy Ghost*, which was conferr'd

ferr'd upon them by the Imposition of Hands, according as they had pray'd it might.

But it is now time to apply what hath been said upon this Subject in general, to you who are to be ordain'd, and whom it more particularly concerns. And therefore I shall now address my self wholly unto them.

Beloved Brethren,

I hope you are all sensible of the Greatness of that Office which you now desire shou'd be conferr'd upon you, and by consequence, of the Necessity that lies upon you to prepare your selves for it. And you have now heard how you ought to do that, even as the first Ministers of the Gospel did it, that is, by *Fasting* and *Prayer*. And therefore I would not have you look upon it as an unnecessary Task and Burden imposed upon you, to spend this, and other Days this Week in the Performance of these great Duties. For you see it is no more than what the first Preachers of the Gospel did, and the Reason of the thing requires from you, insomuch, that you shou'd rather give Thanks to GOD, that you are put in mind to do those things which are so necessary to the preparing and qualifying of you for the great Work you are now to undertake. Having therefore

fore so happy an Opportunity put into your Hands, let me advise and beseech you to be as diligent and serious in the Use and Improvement of it. Devote this and the other Days set apart for Prayer and Fasting upon this Occasion, wholly to your Performance of these great Duties they are set apart for. Think it not enough that you have the Prayers of other devout People for you, nor think it sufficient that you your selves are here present this Morning, and joyn with us in the publick Prayers of the Church, neither yet think it sufficient that you have heard something of the Usefulness and Necessity of Fasting and Praying, in order to the preparing your selves for Ordination; but act accordingly. Fast and Pray in private as well as publick, that you may be worthy to receive the Holy Ghost. And in your private Devotions, I think it would do very well if you observ'd these few Rules.

1. If you have it not already, get the Form or Office of our Church according to which you are to be ordain'd. And consider seriously what is there said concerning the Dignity and the Difficulty of that Office which you are now to be admitted unto. And do not content your selves with reading over that excellent Exhortation and Instruction which is there given you, but

but weigh every Word and Sentence in it. For there is nothing in it but what highly concerns you to understand and remember, for it is supposed that you have well weighed and pondered those things before you go to be ordain'd: And that you have clearly determin'd to apply your selves wholly to that Office whereunto it pleaseth GOD to call you.

Having thus possessed your Minds with a due Sense of the Greatness and Excellency of that Work you are called to, and of the End and Design of your being call'd to it; in the next place, consider seriously the several Questions, which in the Name of GOD, and of his Church, shall be put to you, when you come to be ordain'd. And do not resolve to give those Answers to them which the Church requires, before you have considered whether you can really and in Conscience do it.

As for Example: The first Question propounded to those who shall be ordain'd Deacons, is this, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve GOD for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of His Church?* Which certainly is a Question that you cannot easily answer, unless you have duly weighed it before-hand. And therefore in your private
Retire-

Retirements, search impartially into your own Hearts, and bethink your selves seriously, whether by the Providence of GOD, and the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, you are fitted and qualify'd for that Office, and sincerely desire to be admitted into it, for no other, or at least no greater End or Purpose, than that you may promote GOD's Glory, and edifie his People. And if upon due Examination, you find it is really so with you, then you have as good Ground to trust that you are moved to it by the Holy Ghost, as if he had expressely commanded you to be separated to the Work whereunto he hath called you, as he did here to *Bar-nabas* and *Saul*.

I shall not prevent your private Meditations by running over all the Questions here, but only desire that you would all do it, every one by himself, and that you would deal plainly and faithfully with GOD and your own Consciences in it. As considering that every Answer you there make in the Presence of GOD, upon so solemn an Occasion as that is, is, and ought to be accounted every jot as Sacred as any Oath whatever, and doth as much bind and oblige you to the Performance of what you there promise. And therefore such Answers are not to be made rashly, neither must you venture upon obliging your selves

to GOD and his Church, by such solemn Promises as these are, without mature Deliberation and sincere Resolutions to perform them, the Lord being your Helper.

And indeed by that time that you have duly weighed the Office you are to be admitted into, and the Promises you make when you are admitted into it, you will soon find how difficult, or rather impossible it will be to discharge the one or the other, without the special Grace and Assistance of GOD Himself. Which therefore you must be sure to pray for in private as well as publick. For this is the other great and necessary Duty which is now incumbent upon you ; and which you must perform with all the Seriousness, Vigour and Earnestness that you possibly can : As knowing that both your own, and other Mens Salvation depends very much upon it. And, therefore when you are got into your Closets, where none sees you but that GOD whose Ministers you are now to be, make it your humble and hearty Request to Him, that as he is pleas'd to confer this Office upon you, so He would vouchsafe you such a Measure of His holy Spirit, whereby you may be enabled faithfully to execute the same according to His Will and your own Promise.

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And if you thus sincerely perform both your publick and private Devotions, and prepare your selves by Fasting and Prayer against the Time of your Ordination; as you need not, so you ought not to doubt but GOD will then hear your Prayers and bestow his Spirit upon you, so was not only to authorise, but likewise to assist you in the administering His Word and Sacraments, and in the faithful Discharge of the Office he calls you to. For which purpose it is very expedient, that while the Bishops Hands are upon your Heads, especially when he saith in the Ordination of *Priests, Receive the Holy Ghost*, your Minds be fully intent upon Almighty GOD, and your Faith fixed upon the Promises that he hath made to that purpose in Jesus Christ our Lord. For then he will most certainly grant your Desires, and you will receive the Holy Ghost for the effectual discharge of your Duty, both as Ministers and Christians, that you may both shew others the way to Bliss, and walk in it your selves.

Having thus consider'd how you ought to prepare your selves for your Ordination, and how to carry your selves at it; I must desire you in the last place, to have a care of your selves afterwards too. For which Purpose, when you are ordained,
always

always keep it in your Minds, what Relation you then stand in to Christ, as being his Ministers, the Stewards of the manifold Mysteries of G O D, and behave yourselves accordingly. For remember that the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments Administred by you, depends not upon your small Qualification, but upon Christ's Institution, and his Promises annex'd to it. And therefore you may be Instruments in G O D's Hand for the saving of others, and yet you yourselves may be damn'd.

This St Paul himself was very sensible of, and therefore saith, *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means when I have preach'd unto others; I my self should be a Cast-away.* 1 Cor. 9. 27. And what a sad thing would it be, that others should be brought to Heaven by your means, and yet you yourselves shut out? For the preventing whereof, I would advise you to take this course.

1. Do as St Paul did, *keep your Body under and bring it into Subjection, by Fasting and Abstinence.* Which is every whit as necessary after you are Ordained, to the execution of your Office, as it was before in order to your admillion into it. And not only to the due execution of your Office, but likewise to your performance of all

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other Duties that are required of you, in order to your Eternal Salvation. For if so eminent a Saint, so great an Apostle as *St Paul*, was forc'd to keep his Body under, left after all his care and pains in shewing others the way to Heaven, he himself should miss of it ; sure you and I had need to Fast and Pray to purpose, lest when we have spent our Days in administering the Word and Sacraments for the Salvation of others ; we our selves should perish everlastingly.

Moreover, that you may never forget the Duties which your great Master Christ requires of you, nor yet the Promises you made to him when you were Ordain'd, it would be very well, if you would often, especially upon *Fasting-Days*, read over the Offices for making or ordering Priests and Deacons, and consider what Questions were then propounded to you, and how you answer'd them. I need not tell you what Advantage this would be to you. Do but make tryal of it, and you yourselves will find it by your own Experience.

Another thing that I would mind you of, is this, that although your Ordination respect not the Church of *England* in particular, but Christ's Holy Catholick Church, so that when ordain'd Priests or Deacons here, you are so all the World over ; yet so long
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as you continue to execute your Office in our Church, be sure to observe punctually the Orders and Constitutions of it; which as it is your Duty, in obedience to the Church you live in, so you will find it to be your Interest too. For our Church hath taken care that all the means of Grace and Salvation should be duly administered to all that live in her Communion. And you will be now in the number of those to whom the Administration of them is committed. If you therefore keep close to the Rules that she hath set you in it, it will ease you of a great deal of care and trouble, for you need look no further, for the full discharging the trust reposed in you; for by this means you will discharge it faithfully, and will be found to have done so, when you come to stand before our Lord's Tribunal at the last Day. Whereas, if you, thro' carefulness or Self-merit, shall neglect, diminish or alter any thing that the Church out of Obedience to Christ's Commands, hath provided for the Salvation of those committed to your Charge, and any of them by that means perish, their Blood will be required at your Hands.

And then, *Lastly*. As Christ is pleased to honour you so far as to admit you into his own Ministry, endeavour all ye can to adorn it with an Holy and Good Life.

Adjust your Actions all to the Rules that he hath prescribed in His Holy Gospel. Live above the World, and make it your constant, your only care and study and business, to serve and honour and obey your Great Lord and Master in Heaven. In short, *as he who hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation:* That so you may shew your Flock the way to Heaven, both by your Precept and Example. Do this and you will save yourselves as well as them that hear you. *Which G O D of His Infinite Mercy grant we may all do, through Jesus our Lord; To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, Now and for Ever.*

SERMON X.

I T H E S S. ii. 13.

For this Cause also thank we GOD without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of GOD which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Men, but, as it is in Truth, the Word of GOD, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

I*N you that believe ; There lies the Emphasis, and the Foundation of all that I design at present to build upon these Words. St Paul having been at Thessalonica, and preached the Word of GOD to the Inhabitants of that City ; many of them hearkened to what he said, not as spoken by a Philosopher, but by an Apostle sent from GOD, and therefore receiv'd it, not as the Word of Men, which may or may not be true, but as it really was, the infallible Word of GOD Himself. For this the Apostle here tells them, he thanked GOD*

without ceasing, ascribing it wholly to his Power and Goodness : And puts them withal in mind of two Things ; *first*, of the great Force and Efficacy which the Word they so received had upon them. *The Word of GOD*, saith he, *which effectually worketh in you*. It had, it seems, its whole Effect, its End, its perfect Work upon them, in so much that, as he saith in the following Words, *they were now able to suffer as much for the Sake of Christ, as the Churches in Judea did*. And then, *secondly*, he acquaints them also how the Word of GOD came to have so much Power upon them, even because they believ'd it ; *which effectually worketh*, saith he, *in you that believe* ; In you, and none else, and in you only as believing it, without which they could not have been wrought upon, nor would have received any Benefit at all by it. According to that also of the Apostle to the *Heb.* where speaking of the Gospel preached to the *Jews* under the Law, he saith, *The Word Preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it*, *Heb. 4. 2.* But the Apostle in my Text speaks only in the present Tense, *ὅς ἐνεργείται*, which effectually worketh, not which wrought only when ye heard it, but doth so now, *ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν*, in you believing, or that do believe. As if he had

had said; Seeing you still believe the Word you heard, it still continues to work effectually in you.

I have been the more particular in explaining the Words to you, that you may better see into the Ground of what I would observe from them, which is, that the Efficacy of GOD's Holy Word upon our Minds depends upon our believing it; that whatsoever we hear, can make no Impressions at all upon us, unless we believe it, nor any longer than we do believe it. But so long as we continue to believe what is preached to us out of GOD's Word, so long it will work effectually in us, towards the bringing us out of Darkness into Light, from the Power of Satan unto GOD.

The Understanding of this will be of great Use to shew, both where the Fault lies, that so many in our Age are no better for having the Word of GOD so often preached to them, and also how we may be always the better for it? For which Purpose therefore we shall *first* consider, what we are to understand by the Word of GOD, and *then* what by believing it.

By the Word of GOD, we are to understand the whole System of Divine Revelations, as they are now contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament, *for all Scripture being given by Inspiration of*
GOD,

GOD. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. It is all, one part as well as another, equally the Word of GOD: So that we have the Word of GOD Himself, that whatsoever is there commanded or forbidden, it is his Will that we should or should not do it; that whatsoever is there threaten'd against impenitent Sinners, or promised to the Penitent, He Himself will see it fulfill'd; that whatsoever is there recorded to be said or done, was accordingly said or done, just as it is there recorded; that whatsoever is there foretold, shall certainly come to pass. And that whatsoever is there affirmed, is infallibly true, as being affirmed by him who cannot lye. And by our believing all this, we are to understand, our being fully perswaded of the Truth and Certainty of it, in a manner suitable to the Ground that we have for it, even the Word of GOD Himself, which being the firmest Ground we can have for any thing in the World, we ought to be perswaded in the highest manner that can be, of every thing that is there written.

This being premised in general, it will be easie to demonstrate the Truth of this Proposition, that the Word of GOD, howsoever it is preached or made known, *effectually worketh in them that believe it.* For we find by constant Experience, that a firm
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Belief or full Persuasion of any thing, even in this World, hath that Power over our Minds, that it carrieth all our Affections after it. If we really believe a thing to be good for us, we cannot but love it, and desire it, and labour after it, and be glad when we have got it. If we really believe a thing to be evil or hurtful to us, we cannot but hate it, and abhor it, and shun it, and be troubled when it falls upon us. And this, altho' this our Belief or Persuasion be grounded only upon our own Fancies, or corrupt Reason, or upon the Testimony of our Fellow-Creatures upon Earth. How much more, when it is grounded upon the Testimony of GOD Himself? *If we receive the Witness of Men, the Witness of GOD is Greater,* 1 John 5. 9. It is indeed the greatest that can be in the World. And therefore such things as GOD Himself hath attested, and we accordingly believe as we ought upon his Testimony or Witness, must needs prevail the most powerfully upon us, and work the most effectually in us, that it is possible for any thing in the World to do.

To make this the more plain and easie to be understood, I shall briefly run through the several Parts of GOD's Holy Word, and shew how each of them operates upon a believing Mind. Now all that is there writ-

written, may be reduced to these few Heads, Commands, Threatnings, Promises, Histories, Predictions and Affirmations. Every one of which hath its proper and peculiar Way of working upon the Minds of Men, but they all do it effectually in those which believe.

By the Commands, I mean all such Moral Laws and Precepts which are recorded in Holy Scripture, as enacted by GOD Himself, or, which is the same, by his Holy Spirit in the Prophets and Apostles. All which Laws have equally their Authority and Sanction from the Supreme Law-giver, the universal Governour of the World, who hath been pleased to make and publish them, that all Mankind might know how to govern themselves, their Thoughts, their Words, and their Actions, all according to his Divine Will and Pleasure. Now when we read or hear of any of these Commandments, if at the same time we firmly believe and are fully perswaded in our Minds, that they are prescribed to us by the Almighty Creator, Preserver and Disposer of all things in the World, our Consciences must needs be touched, and our Hearts affected with a quick Sense of the many Obligations that lie upon us to observe them, with an holy Fear lest we should ever break them, and with steady Resolutions to keep them as pun-

punctually as we can. As we see in the Children of *Israel*, when the Law was proclaimed upon Mount *Sinai* with Thundrings and Lightnings, and other Demonstrations of the Divine Glory and Greatness, whereby the People were convinced, that it was indeed the Law of GOD, and that he himself proclaimed it; how were they terrified at it, and resolved to keep it! They desired to see no more such terrible Sight, but were ready now to do whatsoever *Moses* should tell them was the Will of GOD. For they said to him, *Go thou near, and bear all that the Lord our GOD shall say. And speak thou unto us all that the Lord our GOD shall speak unto thee, and we will bear it, and do it*, Deut. 5. 27. So effectually did the Word of GOD work in them, so long as they believed it. And so it doth in all that hear of the Laws of GOD, so long as they really believe them to be his. As all the Moral Commandments are, which we find written in the Holy Scriptures, altho' they were not promulged in such an extraordinary and astonishing Manner, as the Ten were upon Mount *Sinai*, but by the still Voice of his Holy Spirit in the Prophets: They are all equally the Commands of Almighty GOD. Which whosoever believes, when he hears them deliver'd and made

known to him, he must needs receive them with that Reverence and Godly Fear, that will work up his Mind into fervent Desires, and sincere Endeavours to observe and keep them. Insomuch that he who is not so wrought upon by them, may be confident, that whatsoever he may think or say, he is not fully perswaded that they are the Laws of the Supreme Judge and Governour of the World. If he was, he would soon find them working effectually in him.

Especially if he considers withal, the Penalty which GOD hath threatned against those who break his Laws, nothing less than Death it self. When GOD commanded *Adam* not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he told him at the same time, *that in the day that he eat thereof, he should surely die*, Gen. 2. 17. Which if *Adam* had believed, he would never have eaten of that Tree. And therefore the Serpent had no other way to prevail with him to do it, but by perswading him that *he should not die*, Gen. 3. 4. So it is to this Day. In that G O D was pleas'd to threaten the first Sin with Death, he thereby sufficiently declared that all Sin should be punish'd with *Death*, which the Apostle therefore saith, *is the wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. 23. of Sin in general, on as well as another. GOD hath threatned

ned Death against every Sin, Death in its fullest Extent and Latitude, as comprizing under it, all the Curses and Miseries that Mankind is capable of. Hence it is that he denounced so many Curses, against those *who would not observe to do whatsoever he had commanded*, Deut. 28. And how exactly they were all executed upon the Children of *Israel*, may easily appear to any one that compares what *Moses* hath there written, with what *Josephus* hath recorded concerning the Destruction of *Hierusalem* by the *Romans*, in his History of the *Jewish* War ; where we find all the Curses which are there threatned, so literally fulfill'd upon that Sinful Nation, that it may serve as a Comment upon the foresaid Text. And howsoever other People may flatter themselves for a while with the hopes of impunity for their Sins, notwithstanding that they continue in them, the Curse of GOD will most certainly one time or other fall upon them for it: Nay, it is upon them already. For GOD hath said, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*, Gal. 3. 10. Deut. 27. 26. They are already cursed, whether they see it or no ; and they shall find they are so whether they will or no, when Christ shall say to them, *Depart from me*

me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, Matth. 25.41. For this we have the Word of GOD himself, which if Men did really believe, how effectually would it work in them! It would soon turn their Stomachs against all manner of Sin, as that which brings the Curse of GOD upon them, and so is the only Cause of all the Troubles they meet with in this World, and without sincere Repentance will ruine and destroy them for ever.

The same may be said of the Promises which G O D hath made to those who keep his Laws, which are so many and so great, that if Men did but really believe them, they would need no other Arguments to perswade them to do whatsoever he hath commanded. For to those who do so, he hath promised all the Good, all the best Things, yea, all Things that are in the World : *All shall be theirs, 1 Cor. 3. 21. And all shall work together for their Good. Rom. 8. 28.* And who can forbear to do that which he believes will do him good, altho' it be only one particular Good, and altho' he hath no other Ground to believe it, but because a wise and an honest Man, as he supposes, hath told him so? How much more, when the All-wise, Almighty, All-good and gracious GOD hath said,

said, that *they who obey and serve Him, shall have all the good Things they can desire*, as we have all the ground that can be to believe it ; so no Man can really believe it, but he must needs strive all he can to obey and serve Him, which who-soever doth not do, whatsoever he may pretend, I am sure he doth not truly believe GOD's Word. For *true Faith worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6. But *Love is the fulfilling of the whole Law*, Rom. 13. 10. Gal. 5. 14. And therefore he that doth not endeavour to the utmost of his Power to fulfil the whole Law of GOD, may be confident that he doth not truly believe his Word, and Promise to them that do so. And that is the Reason, the only Reason, that it hath no effect upon him.

But in those who believe, it works so effectually, that it puts them upon constant endeavours to do whatsoever GOD hath commanded ; it inspires them with Courage and Resolution in it ; it keeps them *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know that their Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. They know, they are sure that all the Pains they take for him will turn to good Account for themselves. They have GOD's Word for it ;

it; the best security in the World. And therefore they never think that they can lay out too much upon it.

And as the Word and Promise of GOD animates and encourageth those who believe, to obey him in all Things which he hath commanded; so it enables them also to put their whole Trust and Confidence on Him for all Things that He hath promised, that is, for all things that can any way conduce to their good and welfare. By which means, whatsoever happens, their Hearts are always fixed, trusting in the Lord, to defend and keep them, according to his Word, which they are confident can never fail. As we see in the Apostle, GOD hath said; *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*: So that we may boldly say; *the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what Man shall do unto me*, Heb. 13. 5, 6. So in all the Promises which GOD hath made, they who believe, can boldly say that He will make them good. This is that Faith which is so acceptable to GOD, that by it we are accepted of as Righteous before Him, through His beloved Son, in whom all his Promises are made and confirmed to us. As when GOD had made a Promise to *Abraham*, it is said, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was counted to him for Righteousness*,

ness, Rom. 4. 5. Not that we can believe, and not do the Works of GOD, as I have already shewn ; but because when we have done all we can, our Works are so imperfect, that we cannot be accounted Righteous for them : And therefore GOD is Graciously pleas'd to accept of our Faith in his Promises, and in his Son in whom they are made ; and to count that for Righteousness to us, in that we are thereby interested in all the Merits of our Blessed Saviour, in whom we believe, and by whom we are therefore justified before GOD. So effectually do the Promises of GOD work in them who believe and trust on them, that they are thereby both made and accounted Righteous, and so are meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

Neither doth the Historical Part of the Holy Scriptures, want its Influence and Energy in those who receive it as attested by GOD Himself, and accordingly believe it. When we read there how GOD made the World, and what great Things he hath since done in it, if we really believe it ; we must needs be struck with such an admiration of his Infinite Wisdom and Power, as will make us fall down and worship Him ; when we read or hear of the dreadful Judgments which he hath

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inflicted upon obstinate and notorious Sinners ; if we really believe it, we cannot but dread the Thoughts of falling under his Displeasure, and so live in his fear all our Life-long : When we read or hear of the great Deliverances he hath wrought, and the wonderful Works that he hath done for his faithful People and Servants in all Ages ; if we really believe it, we shall be thereby inflamed with Holy Desires, to be in the number of his Faithful Servants, and encouraged to trust on him, and to hope that he will do as much for us, if there be occasion. When we read or hear of the great Sins which the best of Men have sometimes fallen into ; if we really believe it, our Hearts must needs be touched with the Conscience of our own Infirmities, and of the necessity of observing what the Apostle hath taught us in that Case ; *Be not high-minded but fear*, Rom. 11. 20. When we read or hear of the great Troubles and Afflictions which GOD's own People have met with in this World ; if we really believe it, we shall the more chearfully undergo whatsoever he shall be pleased to lay upon us, and with Moses, *choose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of GOD, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season*, Heb. 11. 25. When we read or hear of the

the Vertues and good Works, for which the Saints of old are commended by GOD himself, as that *Enoch* walked with GOD, That *Noah* was a just Man, and perfect in his Generation ; That *Abraham* was strong in Faith, giving Glory unto GOD ; That *Job* was not only patient, but thankful for all his troubles ; That *Moses* was the meekest Man upon Earth, That *David* was a Man after GOD's own Heart, That *Zachariae* and *Elizabeth* were both Righteous before G O D, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, and the like ; if we really believe it, what an Emulation will it raise in us to come as near them as possibly we can ? Especially the Life and Death of our Blessed Saviour, who did none, and yet suffer'd all manner of Evil ; if we really believe it, it would not only make us ashamed of our former Sins, but careful for the future to walk in his steps.

But as to what is recorded concerning our Blessed Saviour, I shall have occasion to speak more particularly of that afterwards, as likewise of the Prophecies or Prædictions that are not yet fulfilled. Wherefore passing by these which are fulfilled already, and so are a great Confirmation of our Faith in GOD's Word ; I shall haste to the last of these Heads, to which I said, whatso-

ever is contain'd in it, may be referr'd, which I call'd Affirmations. By which I mean, whatsoever is affirm'd in the Holy Scriptures concerning GOD, the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, or any other Truth that is there Revealed on purpose that we might believe it: For whatsoever is so affirmed, if we accordingly believe it, it will work so effectually in us, as to cleanse our Hearts from all erroneous and corrupt Opinions, and fill them with a due sense and right Notions of Divine things, according to that of St. *Peter* where he saith, that *GOD purified their Hearts by Faith*, A^ct. 15. 9.

To make this as plain and practical as I can, that ye may not only understand but experience in your selves what Power this part of GOD's Holy Word hath upon them who believe, I shall briefly run through the Articles of our Christian Faith, as they are contained in the Apostles Creed, and show how every one hath its particular influence, and all work together to cleanse and purify the Hearts of those who believe, to take them off from all gross and sensible Objects, and to fix them upon GOD, and the concerns of another Life. I know there are other Great Truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures which are not expressly named in that Creed. But I shall instance only in those that are there expressed: Because that

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is the Creed which I suppose you can all say, you all profess to believe it, and it is that which we repeat every Day in our Publick Devotions. And therefore it will be of great use to understand how you ought to be, and how you will be affected with every Article that is in it, if you actually believe it, whensoever ye hear or say it. And by Consequence how proper it is to repeat and exercise our Faith upon that Creed in our Daily Prayers.

First therefore, *He that cometh unto GOD, must believe that He is, Heb. 11. 6.* and accordingly our Creed begins with, *I believe in GOD the Father Almighty: In GOD, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, Jehovah, Jah, Being, Glory, Goodness, Purity, Excellency, Superexcellency, Perfection itself, existing in and of Himself, GOD blessed for ever.* And who can believe there is such a glorious, amiable, infinite, incomprehensible, eternal Being, and not love and honour Him? Who can believe in Him, and not adore and serve Him with Reverence and Godly Fear? It is impossible. Such a Belief of GOD would raise up our Hearts, and incline all the Powers of our Souls to Him, and fix them so firmly upon Him, that nothing would be able to withdraw them from Him. And if we believe in GOD the Fa-

ther, we must needs believe he hath a *Son*, eternally begotten of Him, otherwise He could not be the Father, which by consequence must needs work so effectually in us, as to confirm and settle us in the Belief of the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour, and of the most glorious Trinity, the Foundation of our whole Religion, and of all our Hopes and Expectations from it. But if we believe also that this GOD the Father is Almighty, that He can do whatsoever He pleaseth, whensoever, wheresoever, and howsoever He pleaseth to do it; that nothing can resist His Will, all things being infinitely below Him, and entirely subject to Him: Who can imagine, but they who feel it, what Impressions such a Faith would make upon our Hearts? It would cut us to the Quick with Fear of offending, and with Desires of pleasing GOD Almighty above all things in the World, as believing that nothing can do us either good or hurt, but just as he pleaseth. Especially if we go on to believe, that this *GOD the Father Almighty, is the Maker of Heaven and Earth*: That He made the Sun, the Moon, and all the Planets and fixed Stars, with every thing that is in them, upon them, about them, above them or beyond them, farther than our very Thoughts can reach: That He made the Heaven of Heavens,

vens, with all the Angels, Arch-Angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the Pure and Spotless, Glorious and most perfect Creatures that reside there; That He made the Earth, and the Sea, with all things that are therein: And that He did not only thus make all things at first, but he is still, He is always the Maker of them, continually upholding them in their Being, ordering, and disposing, and governing them, as he Himself sees good. Who can believe this, and not admire the Glory of that infinite Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness that shineth forth in the whole Creation? Who can believe this and not cry out, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created, Rev. 4. 11. Allelujab, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, let us rejoyce and be glad, and give Honour to Him, Rev. 19. 6, 7. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be Glory for ever, Amen, Rom. 11. 36. And as we believe in GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, so also in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: That He is Jesus, that is, as the Name imports, the Saviour, the only Saviour we have in all the World; That this Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed of GOD, to be a Priest, a Pro-*

phet, and a *King*, in order to his accomplishing our Salvation: That this Jesus Christ is the only Son of GOD, the Only-Begotten of the Father, of the same Nature and Substance with Him: And that He is the Lord of the whole World, and in a particular manner our Lord and Governor. Could we live with a constant Belief of all this, how happy should we then be? Then we should put our whole Trust and Confidence in Jesus, and in Him alone, for all things necessary for our Salvation: Then we should apply ourselves to Christ upon all Occasions, as our *Priest*, to make *Atonement for us*; as our *Propbet*, to instruct us; and as our *King*, to defend and govern us: Then the only Son of GOD would be our only Joy and Comfort, so that our *Souls* would always magnifie the Lord, and our *Spirits* rejoice in God our Saviour: Then we should submit unto the Will of Christ our Lord, and strive above all things, to serve, and please and obey him, and so should always live under his Conduct and Protection.

Who, as it follows in the Creed, *was conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary*; that is, who being in the Form of GOD, took upon him the Form of a Servant, or became Man too, by being conceiv'd, not in the ordinary way as other Men

Men are, but by the Holy Ghost Himself, and born as miraculously of a pure Virgin, the Virgin *Mary*, of the Stock of *David*; so that both his Conception and Birth was supernatural and miraculous, as being effected by the immediate Power of GOD Himself. Which is such an Article of our Faith, that if firmly believed, it would make us astonished at the infinite Love of GOD to Mankind, that He himself shou'd become Man, and for that Purpose, alter the whole Course of Natural Causes which He hath settled in the World, and all to reconcile Himself to Mankind, and Mankind unto Himself. Who can believe this, and not love that GOD who so loved us, as to be conceived by his own Holy Spirit, and born of a Virgin, and all to redeem and save us?

But how did this wonderful Person, this GOD-Man, redeem and save us? That we are taught in the next Words of the Creed, He *suffer'd under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into Hell*. He suffer'd all the Punishments which the Law of GOD had threatned against the Sins of Men. He suffer'd Shame and Reproach in His glorious Name; He suffer'd Pain and Anguish in his Body; He suffer'd Grief and Sorrow in His Soul; this He suffer'd under *Pontius Pilate*, a Roman

man Governour, and therefore suffer'd also that cruel and accursed Death which the *Romans* inflicted upon notorious Malefactors; He was crucified, His Hands and Feet were nailed to a Cross, and there he hung till he gave up the Ghost and died, and so offer'd up himself as a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World; and being dead, his Body was buried or laid in the Grave, and his Soul went down to Hell, not to suffer there, but to shew that he had suffer'd enough already, and that the Gates of Hell could have no more Power over him, or his. For he had now overcome the Devil, and therefore triumphed over him in his own Kingdom.

Is it possible really to believe all this, and yet not be affected with it? To believe that the Only-begotten Son of GOD, suffer'd so much for our Sins, and yet continue in them? To believe that he was crucified for us, and yet we not *crucifie our Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*? To believe that he died in our stead, and yet not live to his Honour and Glory? To believe that he was buried, and yet we not be *buried with him by Baptism into Death*? Rom. 6. 4. To believe that he went down into Hell, and yet that we should walk in the ways that lead thither? That he hath overcome the Devil, and yet we should

should be overcome by him? It is impossible. Men may talk of what Christ suffered, and profess to believe it, and yet be never the better for it; but if they did what they profess, if they really believed that such an extraordinary Person suffered in such an extraordinary manner for Sin, yea, and for their Sins too, it must needs work in them true Repentance, not to be repented of. So as to make them not only ashamed of their former Sins, and heartily sorry for them, but stedfastly resolved to walk for the future in Newness of Life. They would never think they can do enough for him, who hath done and suffer'd so much for them.

But what saith our blessed Lord in *David*; *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither will thou suffer thine holy one to see Corruption*, Psal. 16. 10. Acts 2. 31. And accordingly, though he was *crucified, dead and Buried*, and *went down into Hell*, yet as it follows in the Creed, *the third Day he rose again from the Dead, ascended into Heaven, sitteth on the right Hand of GOD the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead*. We heard before how low Christ humbled himself for us, and here we see how highly he is now exalted by the Father, and all for us too. The third Day after his Soul
and

and Body were separated upon the Cross, they were united together again, and so He revived or rose again to Life, and soon after went up in both so united into Heaven, and was there set *at the right Hand of GOD, Angels, and Authorities and Powers being made subject to him*, 1 Pet. 3. 22. Neither was he only thus set at the right Hand of GOD, at his first going into Heaven, but as it is in the Creed, He sitteth there now, as *Head over all things to the Church*, Ephes. 1. 22. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, vested with absolute Authority over the whole Creation, and as the true High-Priest, appearing in the Presence of GOD, making Atonement and Reconciliation for all that believe in Him, by vertue of that Blood which he shed for the Sins of the whole World, when He was upon Earth. And that seems to be the Reason why in the *Revelations* He is all along represented as a Lamb sitting upon His Throne, because He sits there as the Lamb that offer'd up himself for the Sins of the World, and by vertue of that one Oblation of Himself once offer'd, he is continually propitiating or reconciling his Father, and so interceding with Him for all his faithful People, that their Sins may be pardoned, and their Persons accepted of, or accounted Righteous before
GOD.

GOD. This he always did, is still doing at this very Moment, and so will be to the End of the World : When He will come to Earth again, and summon all Mankind that ever lived, together with those which shall be then alive, to appear before Him, and will pass his final Sentence upon every one, *according to that He hath done in the Body, whether it be good or evil,* 2 Cor. 5. 10.

I hope I need not tell you, that if ye believed all this, it would work effectually in you, you could not surely but feel it in yourselves. For, I speak to them who believe, did not your Hearts even burn within you, while you heard what a glorious Saviour ye have in Heaven? Did not your Souls leap for joy, that ye have such an Advocate ever living to make Intercession for you? Do not you still find your selves refreshed and cheered at the hearing, that he who loved you so well as to lay down his Life for you, is now at the Right Hand of GOD, and hath all things in Heaven and Earth entirely at his Command. Hath it not made you ready to Praise and Magnifie his Name, and to joyn with the Choir of Heaven in singing, *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever ?* Rev.

5. 13. And when you heard that this glorious Person will come one day to judge all Mankind, and you among the rest, did not this stir up in you good Desires and holy Resolutions to prepare your selves for that great Account you must then give to him? If you found no such Effect in your selves upon the hearing of these Fundamental Articles of our Religion, you may conclude, that you do not believe them: For if you did, you would not only have felt all that I have said, but far more than I am able to express.

The same may be said of all the other Articles which remain. If you believed *in the Holy Ghost*, the Lord, and the Giver of Life, and of all Grace and Holiness, you could never hear of Him, but you would immediately lift up your Hearts to him, to to be quickened, and sanctified, or made holy by him. If you believed *the holy Catholick Church*, or the Congregation of all Christian People, without which there is no Salvation, according to that of the Apostle, *The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved*, Acts 2. 47. If you believed this, I say, you could never hear of Christ's Church, but it would fill your Hearts with Joy and Thankfulness to GOD, that you are admitted into it, and strengthen your Resolutions of living so as
that

that you may be saved in it. If you believ'd *the Communion of Saints*; that there is a Society or Company of Persons in the World, which GOD himself is pleased to account real Saints, his own faithful Servants, his Elect and peculiar People, which he hath a special Love for, and takes particular Care of, both in this World and the next: Did you believe this, whensoever you hear of it, it would put you upon longing and striving all ye can to be in the Number of those blessed Souls, *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of GOD*, Ephes. 2. 19. and so meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, Col. 1. 12.

If you believed *the Forgiveness of Sins*, That upon your Repentance and Conversion unto GOD, your Sins will be all pardon'd by the Blood of Christ; every time you hear of it, it would work more and more upon you, to turn you from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD, *that ye may receive this Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith, that is in Christ Jesus!* Acts 26. 18.

If you believed *the Resurrection of the Body*, that altho' your Bodies must return to the Earth out of which they were taken, yet they shall be raised up again to stand before

before Christ's Tribunal, whensoever you hear of it, it would make you more careful to live in your Bodies so, as that ye may not be afraid, either to lay them down, or take them up again.

And as for *Life everlasting*, if you really believ'd that *the Wicked shall go into everlasting Punishment, and the Righteous into Life eternal*, Matth. 25. 46. What a mighty Change would it make in you, whensoever you hear of it? It wou'd make you dread the Thoughts of continuing in a State of Wickedness, and resolve for the future, to devote your selves wholly to the Service of Almighty GOD, that when you go out of this wicked and naughty World, you may live with Christ and his holy Angels in perfect Glory and Happiness for ever.

Thus effectually do the plain Articles of our Religion work upon them that believe. And so doth the whole Word of GOD. As I doubt not but many here present have found by their own Experience, who when they have heard any part of it revealed to them, upon their believing and receiving it, as it is in truth the Word of GOD, they have felt it to be, as the Apostle saith, *quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts*
and

and Marrow, and a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, Heb.

4. 12. It comes upon them like Fire upon Tinder, or such combustible Matter, where it immediately catcheth and spreadeth itself all over it. Whereas, upon those who do not believe, it falls like a Spark into Water; it is no sooner there, but it is out. And that is the great Reason why so many hear the Word of GOD, and yet are never the better for it; because, whatsoever they may profess, they are not fully perswaded of it, they do not really believe it, with such a Faith as is due to the infallible Word and Testimony of GOD himself: No, not so much as they believe what they see or hear, or is told them by fallible Men. And then it is no Wonder that it makes no Impression upon them. It is impossible it should, both from the Nature of the thing itself, and from the just Judgment of GOD upon them, for not believing what he himself hath said.

But let others do what they please. Let us do what we profess; even believe whatsoever GOD hath revealed to us in his holy Word; that whensoever we hear, or so much as think of it, his Grace may set it home upon our Hearts, and make it work effectually in us; that it may be always profitable to us for Doctrine, for Reproof, for

Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that we may be perfect, thoroughly furnish'd unto all good Works, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. And for that Purpose, let us be always thinking of GOD's Word, and ruminate by Faith so long upon it, that it may be digested into proper Food and Nourishment for our Souls, that we may grow thereby in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. 18. That whilst others live only by Sense, or Fancy, or at the best, by corrupt and carnal Reason, so as to be mov'd and acted only by them in every thing they do, we may for the future live by the Faith of the Son of GOD, and with a constant Belief of those great Truths which he hath revealed to us, as the great Principle of our Life and Actions.

What Holy and Heavenly Lives shou'd we then live? Then we shou'd repent of all our Sins, because it is written in GOD's Word, *That except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke 13. 3, 5.* Then we shou'd take care of every thing we do, because it is written, *GOD will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Eccles. 12. 14.* Then we should refrain, not only from prophane, but idle Talk, because it is written, *That every*
idle

idle word that Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment, Matth. 12. 36. Then we should be humble and lowly in our own Eyes, because it is written, GOD resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble, 1 Pet. 5. 5. Then we should strive all we can to walk in all the Commandments of the LORD blameless, because it is written, He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, John 14. 21. Then we should love the World no longer, because it is written, If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2. 15. Then we should never forsake the Assembling ourselves together, but should take all Opportunities of joyning in the Publick Worship of GOD, because it is written, Where two or three are met together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them, Matth. 18. 20. Then we should not be cast down at any Chastisement or Afflictions that GOD is pleased to lay upon us, because it is written, Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth, Heb. 12. 6. Then we should never despair of GOD's Mercy in the Pardon of our Sins, because it is writ

ten, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 John 2. 1, 2. Then we should press towards the Mark for the Prize of the High Calling of GOD in Christ Jesus, because it is written, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne,* Rev. 3. 21.

Yea, could we always live with a firm Belief of what is written in GOD's holy Word, we should live in the other World, while we are in this; our Conversations would be always in Heaven, our Thoughts and Affections would be still running upon Almighty GOD as present with us, or upon our Saviour, as interceding for us, or upon the Work that He hath set us, or upon the Account that we must give him of it, or upon the Reward that He hath promised to those who do it faithfully, or upon something or other which we find there written; and so should steer on an even Course thro' all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, till we come to the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls, thro' Jesus Christ our only Saviour, *to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever.* Amen.

Now

Now these things being thus plainly laid down before you, give me leave to deal freely with you concerning what ye have now heard, for it concerns you all very much, infinitely more than any thing in this World can do. You cannot surely but know, that without Faith it is impossible to please GOD, that your Sins can never be pardon'd, nor your Souls ever saved without it. Now by what you have now heard, you may easily perceive whether you have true Faith or no, whether you believe the Gospel, as you are there requir'd, to the Saving of your Souls. For if the Word preached, makes no Impression upon you; If you hear Sermon after Sermon, as many do, to our Shame be it spoken, and yet be never the Wiser nor better for it; If you be not *Doers of the Word, but Hearers only, deceiving your own Souls*: you may then conclude, that notwithstanding your Profession of the Gospel, you do not believe it. You believe it no more than they who do not so much as profess it, and therefore are as yet in the same deplorable Condition with them, even, in *the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity*. But if the Word preached work effectually in you; if it stirs up your Hearts, and strengthens your Resolutions to obey it; If it puts you upon con-

stant and sincere Endeavours to live according as you are there taught, you have then good Ground to believe, that you do really believe it, and shall as certainly obtain what is there promised, as you sincerely perform what is commanded in it.

VVherefore, in the Name of Christ our Saviour, I beseech you all, not to satisfie yourselves any longer with the bare Hearing of GOD's VVord. But whensoever you hear it read or preached to you, receive it as it is in Truth the VVord of GOD, and act your Faith accordingly upon it, that so it may work effectually in you, both while you hear it, and whensoever you call it to mind again. As for Example, you have lately heard, how you ought to worship and glorify GOD, and how to serve him daily in his House of Prayer, and often at his Holy Table: These things have been plainly deliver'd to you out of GOD's own VVord.

Now, tho' you have hitherto seem'd not to regard GOD's Holy VVord, nor so much as to believe it to be his VVord, in that you have not done it, yet now that you are put in mind of it again, *shew your Faith by your Works*; manifest to the VVorld, and to your own Consciences, that you believe GOD's VVord, by your constant performing the foresaid Duties,
and

and whatsoever else you hear to be there required of you. And whensoever you have the Gospel preached to you, do but receive it with Faith, and you cannot but receive Benefit and Comfort from it. Then every Sermon you hear will do you good, and you will have Cause to thank GOD for it. And so shall we also who preach GOD's Word unto you: For then we may truly say to you, as the Apostle here saith to the Thessalonians, *For this Cause also thank we GOD without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of GOD, which ye heard of us, ye receiv'd it not as the Word of Men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of GOD, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

SERMON XI.

2 C O R. 5. 20.

*Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ,
as though G O D did beseech you by
us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye
reconciled to G O D.*

WE live in an Age, and among a
People that place a great part, if
not the whole, of their Religion in hearing
Sermons : And yet we find but few that
are ever the more Religious for all they
hear. Most contenting themselves with
coming to Church, and continuing or per-
haps sitting down there all the while that
the Prayers are read , and a Sermon
Preached, and then going home again,
without ever concerning themselves any
further about what they have heard ; nor so
much as thinking of it any more. And
then it is no wonder that they are never
the wiser, nor the better for it. But it
may

may justly seem a great wonder, how it comes to pass, that the Word of GOD which of itself is *sharper than a two-edged Sword*, should notwithstanding make so little Impression upon those who hear it. But though they hear it over and over again, they are never *pricked in their Heart*, as St Peter's hearers were, nor any way touched or affected with it; but still continue just as they were, careless and unconcerned about their future State, and every thing relating to it, how plainly, how powerfully soever it is pressed upon them.

This may justly seem strange to one that considers, how commonly the Word of GOD is Preached among us, both in the City and Country. But several Reasons may be assign'd for it. One of the chief is, that Men in hearing the Word Preached, usually look no further than to him that Preacheth it; taking what he saith to them as coming only from him their Fellow-Greature, a Man of like Passions with themselves, and therefore regard it no more than what is said by any other Man. Whereas if they really believed and considered, that the Word they hear is the Word of GOD himself, and that he who Preacheth it, Preacheth not in his own Name but GOD's, and accordingly received

ceiv'd it, as the *Thessalonians* did, not as the Word of Man, but as it is in truth, the Word of GOD which effectually worketh in them that believe, 1 Thess. 2. 13. They would soon find it working effectually also upon them. It would then come with that Power and Force upon them, that it would cut them to the Heart, and make them cry out as *S^t Peter's* hearers did; *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Act. 2. 37.

This therefore is that which *S^t Paul* in my Text puts the *Corinthians* in mind of. And the better to prepare them for it, he first acquaints them in the foregoing Verses, that, GOD hath reconciled *Mankind to himself by Jesus Christ*, and that he hath committed the Word and Ministry of this Reconciliation to us, the Apostles and their Successors in all Ages; that we in his Name and by his Authority might publish it to the World, and persuade Men to accept of the Peace which he now offers to them, so as to be reconciled to him, as he is to them by Jesus Christ. And having said this, the Apostle draws this Conclusion from it; *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though GOD did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.*

This

This is a Truth so necessary for all Christians to know, that it is the first thing that St Paul put those he wrote to in mind of in all his Epistles, (which he wrote as from himself only, without joyning any other with him) beginning them with saying, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, or, *Paul called to be an Apostle*, or the like; that they to whom he wrote might know, that he did not write to them as a private Person, but as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, that is, as the Word signifies a Legate or Messenger of Christ, sent and empower'd by him to write: That so they might receive what he was about to write to them, not as coming from him, but from Christ himself; an Apostle being in effect the same with an Ambassador. But foreseeing that this Name would in process of Time be appropriated only to the Twelve, and such as were called immediately by Christ himself, as He and some other were; therefore in my Text, speaking not only of these, but of such also as should succeed them in any part of their Apostolical Office in all Ages, he alters the Phrase, not saying, we are *Apostles*, but we are *Ambassadors* for Christ. A Word, that is commonly known to signifie such as are sent by a Prince to a Foreign Country, to treat in

in his Name about Matters of State, as particularly about Peace and War. And so Christ himself useth the Word, where speaking of a King going to make War with another King, he saith, that *He sits down first, and consults whether he be able to meet him or no : Or else, while the other is a great way off, he sendeth an Ambassage, and desireth Conditions of Peace,* Luk. 14. 32. So here, although Almighty GOD can meet with us when he pleaseth, and we are no way able to withstand him ; yet howsoever he is Graciously pleased to send some Men to treat with others in his Name about Peace with him, to acquaint them with the easie Conditions that he hath made and expects from them, and to assure them that upon their Performance of the said Conditions, he will be reconciled to them, and at Peace with them : And therefore all who are thus Sent or Commissionated by Him, to Act in His Name, are properly called *Ambassadors* ; and, as the Apostle here saith, *Ambassadors for Christ*, or in the Place and stead of Christ. As it was He that procured this Peace for Mankind, so He is the chief manager of all Things relating to it : Therefore called, the Angel, or, as we translate it, *the Messenger of the Covenant*, Mal. 3. 1. Because He was Sancti-
fied

fied and sent by the Father, *to Publish and Declare it to the World*, Joh. 6. 57. *cap. 8. 29. cap. 10. 36.* And did it so faithfully, that before He went out of the World He could truly say unto the Father. *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World,—I have given unto them the Words which thou gavest me : And they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed, that thou didst send me*, Joh. 17. 6, 8. Where we may likewise observe, that like a wise and faithful Ambassador, He kept strictly to the Instructions, and to the very Words which the Father had given Him ; in whose Name he professeth that He came, and Spake and Acted all along while He was upon Earth, *John 5. 43. chap. 8. 38 chap. 10. 25.*

Wherefore Jesus Christ being the Mediator between GOD and Men, and as such, having all Power given him in Heaven and Earth for the transacting the great business of Reconciliation between them ; when he was about to leave the Earth, as Man, and go up to Heaven, to reside there as our Advocate with the Father, he delegated some Men to supply his Place upon Earth, and to carry on the great Work which he had begun among Men :

These

These he called *his Apostles* or *Ambassadors*, because they were sent by Him, and empowered to Act in his Name and stead, and according to the Instructions that he gave them. Which that the World in all Ages might be fully assured of, he order'd the Commission which he granted them to be Recorded, *Job. 20.* Where it is written; That the same Day on which he rose from the Dead, in the Evening, he came to them where they were assembled, and when he had convinced them that he was the same Person that had been Crucified three Days before, by shewing them his Hands and Feet that were nailed to the Cross, he then said unto them again, *Peace be unto you. As my Father sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained, v. 21, 22, 23.*

Where we may observe, that he sent them after the very same manner as the Father had sent him. *As my Father, saith he, sent me, even so send I you.* And therefore as the Father had sent him by Anointing him with the Holy Ghost, for the Office he was to perform, *Isa. 61. 1. Luk. 4. 18. Act. 10. 38.* which was signified by the *Spirit descending*
like

like a Dove, and lighting upon him, when he was Baptized and so inaugurated into the said Office: Even so, he sent his Apostles; for he breathed on them, and saith, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost proceeding from him as it doth from the Father: When Christ breathed upon his Apostles, he thereby anointed them with the Holy Ghost and with Power, to execute the Office which he now committed to them. And that they might know, that this was designed not only for them, but for all that should succeed them in the said Office to the End of the World, when he afterwards gave them his Instructions for the Execution of it, he said to them; Lo, I am with you always, even to End of the World, Matt. 28. 20. From whence the Apostles clearly understanding that their Office was to continue to the End of the World, they took care to confer it upon others by laying their hands upon them, and so transferring to them of the same Spirit which they had received from Christ, the same way that Moses had done it by GOD's own Appointment to Joshua, Numb. 27, 18, 23. And therefore such upon whom they laid their hands, are said to be sent by the Holy Ghost, particularly Paul and Barnabas, Act. 13. 4. And the same St Paul tells
the

the Elders of *Ephesus* upon whom he had laid his hands, that the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops or *Overseers*, Act. 20. 28. And put *Timothy* in mind of the Gift of GOD which was in him by the laying on of his hands, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Thus the Holy Ghost which the Apostles received immediately from Christ himself, hath been handed down from them to other, and so to others successively to this Day, and will be to the End of the World. And all such on whom they who regularly succeed the Apostles in their whole Office, lay their hands with an intention to confer the Holy Ghost, as in the Ordination of Priests among us; they also receive such a measure of it whereby they are qualified and commission'd to Act in Christ's Name and stead, in the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, as the Apostles themselves did; and therefore are properly Ambassadors for Christ, as they were. And Christ is as really with them as he was with his first Apostles, in the Execution of their Office in all Ages, according to the Promise he made them, of being *with them always even to the End of the World.*

It was necessary to make this as plain as I could in few Words ; that ye may understand how we come to be Ambassadors for Christ, as the Apostle here speaks, so as to act in his Name and by his Commission, without which nothing we do can signifie any thing. Any Man may read the Scriptures, or make an Oration to the People, but it is not that which the Scriptures call Preaching the Word of GOD, unless he be sent by GOD to do it. *For how can they preach except they be sent ? Rom. 10. 16.* A Butcher might kill an Ox or a Lamb, as well as the High-Priest ; but it was no Sacrifice to GOD, unless one of his Priests did it. *And no Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron, Heb. 5. 4.* Any Man may treat of Publick Affairs as well as an Ambassador ; but he cannot do it to any purpose, without a Commission from his Prince. As suppose a Foreign Nation should set up one among themselves to make a League with *England*, what would that signifie, when he is not Authoriz'd by the King to do it ? And yet this is the Case of many among us, who, as the Apostle foretold, cannot *endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts beap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears,* 2 Tim. 4. 3. But such Teachers as

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Men

Men thus heap to themselves, howsoever they may tickle their itching Ears, they can never touch their Hearts. For that can be done only by the Power of GOD, accompanying and assisting his own Institution and Commission. Infomuch that if I did not think, or rather was not fully assured, that I had such a Commission to be an Ambassador for Christ, and to act in his Name ; I should never think it worth the while to Preach or Execute any Ministerial Office. For I am sure, that all I did would be null and void of itself, according to GOD's ordinary way of working ; and we have no ground to expect Miracles. But blessed be GOD, we in our Church by a successive Imposition of hands continued all along from the Apostles themselves, receive the same Spirit that was conferr'd upon them for the Administration of the Word and Sacraments ordained by our Lord and Master, and therefore may do it as effectually to the Salvation of Mankind as they did. For as they were, so are we *Ambassadors for Christ*.

As tkough GOD did beseech you by us,
 or, as the words may be render'd, As if
 GOD did call upon you by us ; by us,
 as he did by Christ, whose Ambassadors we
 are, and Proxies in Things pertaining unto
 GOD. So that GOD *who at sundry*
times

times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, and hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Heb. 1. 1. He still continues to speak by those whom his Son hath sent to speak in his Name. As the Son himself said to his Apostles, and in them to all that should regularly succeed them; *It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you, Matt. 10. 20.* Whatsoever we speak according to the Instructions which Christ our Master hath given us, *it is in Truth the Word of G O D, 1 Thess. 2. 13.* It is G O D that speaketh by us. According to that of David, *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue, 2 Sam. 23. 2.* For we speaking only what Christ our Lord spake before us, and speaking it only in his Name and by his Authority, as what he spake was the Word of G O D, so is that which we speak too: For we speak, or, as it were, repeat it only after Him, as his Ambassadors, sent by him to speak it in his Place and stead.

And therefore, it follows in the Text, *we pray you in Christ's stead:* As if Christ himself was here present. For he being now as to his Body in Heaven, he sends his Ministers or Ambassadors to represent

him, and supply his Place upon Earth, and to do in his Name what he himself did when he was here, and would still do if he was now present in Body, as he is by his Spirit and Power; according to the foresaid Promise, which he made to his Apostles and Ambassadors in all Ages, *Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the World*: And according to what he told them upon another occasion, saying, *He that beareth you, beareth me: And he that despiseth you, despiseth me: And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, Luk. 10. 16. Whereby he plainly signified what he afterwards told them in express Terms, that, As the Father sent him, so he sent them as his Ambassadors to treat in his Name: And that as the Persons of Ambassadors are always reckoned Sacred and Inviolable; so that what an Ambassador doth in the Name of his Prince, is look'd upon as done by the Prince himself: And as an affront offer'd to an Ambassador, reflects on the Prince that sent him; So whatsoever is done to the Ministers or Ambassadors of Christ as such, is done to Christ himself. They who hear them, hear Him, and they who despise them, despise Him; as they who despise Him, whom the Father sent, despise the Father who sent him.

From

From hence therefore ye may see, how truly the Apostle here saith : *We pray you in Christ's stead*, and how necessary it is for you to hearken to what we say in his Name, lest ye be found in the number of those who despise Christ, together with the Doctrine that he teacheth, and the Advice that he gives you by us : For it is in his stead we pray you. But what do we pray you in his stead to do ? Nothing but what is really for your good : Nothing but what tends to your Eternal Happiness and Welfare, and therefore nothing but what it is your interest to do, whether we prayed you to do it, or no. For seeing Christ came into the World for no other End, but to make you happy ; and hath done and suffer'd so much as he hath for that only purpose ; ye cannot imagine that he by us, or we from him, should pray you to do any thing but what is indispensably necessary in order to your attainment of true Felicity. And altho' we do not command, but only pray you in Christ's stead ; yet it being in his stead we pray, ye ought to give the same deference to it, as if we commanded you. The Request of an Earthly Prince, is taken by his faithful Subjects as a Command : How much more when the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, is pleased

to condescend so far as to make a Request to you? That surely is to be received as the highest sort of Commanding, in that it doth not only signifie his Will, but also lays a fresh Obligation upon you to observe it, seeing He is graciously pleased to deal so gently and kindly with you, in such a way as that your Obedience to Him may be your own voluntary Act: Not being forc'd into it only by his peremptory Command, but drawn with the Bands of Love.

Love indeed! The highest that can be shewn you. For after all, what is it that we thus pray you in Christ's stead? Nothing else but to be reconcil'd to GOD, *we pray you*, saith the Apostle, *in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to GOD*. One would think, there was no great Need that such a Request should be made to you, much less that it should be made in no less a Name than His that made and governs the World. For, who would not of his own accord be reconcil'd to GOD, if he might? If Men would but consult their own real Interest, this certainly would be the first thing they would all strive after. And yet GOD knows there are but few that do it: And therefore, out of his infinite Love and Mercy, He is pleased to send his Ambassadors one after another, rising up

up early, and sending them to call upon Men, and to pray them in his Name to do it. And he hath sent me this Day to make the same Request and Prayer to you, even that ye would be reconcil'd to him.

But that ye may fully understand what it is that I pray you in Christ's stead to do, and likewise how ye may do it aright, ye must take notice, that *by Nature* ye are all *the Children of Wrath*, one as well as another, *Ephes. 2. 3.* For he that made you, is angry with you. for not answering his End in making you, which was to serve and glorifie Him in obeying and observing the Laws which He for that purpose hath set you. Whereas ye have all broken His said Laws, and so in stead of glorifying, ye have dishonoured Him thro' the whole Course of your Lives, and therefore are justly fallen under his Displeasure. But he notwithstanding hath been graciously pleased to find out, and put you into, a way of being reconciled to him : Not by suffering your Sins to go unpunish'd, but by not imputing them to you, but laying the Punishments which were due unto him for them, upon another, even upon his Only-begotten Son, as the Apostle here acquaints us from him, saying, *For he hath made him who knew no Sin, to be Sin for us, or an Offering for our Sins*; that is, as the Pro-

phet expresseth it, *He hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. And his Only-begotten Son having thus born the Punishments which his Justice required for our Sins, He is now ready to extend his Mercy to us, and to receive us again into his Favour, upon such easie Terms and Conditions, that it is our own Fault, unless we perform them, so as to be reconciled again to GOD.

For all that is requir'd on your Parts, is only to *repent and believe the Gospel*, Mark 1. 15. This was all that our Lord himself called upon Mankind to do, when he first entred upon his Ministry, and the Substance of all that He taught afterwards, and commanded his Apostles to teach. He himself saith, *That he came to call Sinners to Repentance*, Luke 5. 32. And told his Disciples, *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. First Repentance, and then Remission of Sins; but both in his Name, and among all Nations, that all might believe in Him for it. And accordingly, when the People desir'd to know of St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles what they should do? St. Peter said unto them, *Repent and be Baptiz'd every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins*, Acts

Acts 2. 37. They must not only repent, so as to forsake their former Superstitions and Vices of all sorts, but they must also believe in Jesus Christ ; so as to be Baptized in his Name, and become his Disciples indeed, believing and practising all that He hath taught them before they could be reconciled to GOD so as to have their Sins pardoned. This is that which Christ himself also gave in charge to his Apostles, at the same time that He sent them out as his Ambassadors into the World : *Go ye, saith He, and teach, or rather make, all Nations Disciples, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World, Matth. 28. 19, 20.* These are the Instructions which He gave them and their Successors, together with their Commission to be his Ambassadors to the End of the World. He requires them to go and call upon all Nations to become his Disciples, and to make them so by Baptizing them according to his Institution, In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost : And then to teach them to observe not only some, but all things whatsoever He hath commanded, whether with his own Mouth, or else by his Prophets, Apostles,
or

or other Holy Men of GOD, who spake as they were moved by his Holy Spirit.

These therefore being the Orders and Instructions which Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of Mankind, hath given to all whom he sends and employs as his Ambassadors upon Earth; In his Name and in his Stead, I pray and beseech all here present, to come up to the Terms which he hath made for your Reconciliation to GOD. Repent, repent of all your former Sins. You cannot but all know, every one, the Sins that he hath hitherto been guilty of, and is still addicted to. If ye do but look into your own Hearts and Lives, you cannot but see, how little Good, and how much Evil you have done since ye came into the World. You cannot but be conscious to your selves, that you have often transgressed the Laws and Commandments of Almighty GOD, who sent you hither, by doing what you ought not to do, and by not doing what ye ought; and so have broken also that solemn Vow and Promise which ye made to GOD, when ye were Baptized, and made the Members and Disciples of Jesus Christ, and are still apt to do so one way or other every Day.

Now therefore I pray you in Christ's Stead break off your Sins, all your Sins, by Repentance and Amendment of Life. *Let not Sin reign any longer in your mortal Body,*
that

that ye should obey it in the Lusts thereof: But mortifie the Deeds of the Body, and destroy the ill Habits ye have contracted by a long Continuance in any Sort of Vice or Wickedness. Set yourselves in good earnest, upon *denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* Take heed that your Hearts be never over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, or the Cares of this Life. Be Just and Righteous in all your Dealings, and if ye have wronged any Man, be sure to make him Restitution. *As ye have Opportunity, do good all Men, especially to them that are of the Household of Faith; and whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them.* Love the Lord your GOD with all your Hearts, and with all your Souls: Pray without ceasing, and in every thing give Thanks unto him: Sanctifie his Holy Name, and make him your only Fear and Dread. Live with a constant Dependence upon his Word, and Submission to his Will. Acknowledge him in all your Ways, honour him with all your Substance, *serve and worship him with Reverence and Godly Fear.* Let your Hearts be always running after him, your Spirits rejoycing in him, and your whole Souls be reconciled and inclined to him, and to those Holy Ways that

that he hath prepared for you to walk in. Study all ye can to promote his Glory, in your several Places and Stations in the World. And for that purpose, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well, and whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Believe on him as your only Saviour, Mediator and Advocate with the Father, *who ever liveth to make Intercession for those who come unto GOD by him:* And therefore as you thus truly repent of all your Sins, and come unto GOD by him, trust also and depend upon him to make your Peace with GOD; nothing doubting but that he will intercede so effectually for you, that for his Sake, and upon the Account of his Merits and Mediation for you, your Sins being all pardon'd, GOD will be reconciled to you, and you shall be reconciled to GOD, and restor'd to his Love and Favour again, as much as if ye had never offended him in all your Lives.

Having thus pray'd you in Christ's Stead, and for the most part in his very Words, to be reconciled to GOD, it may seem needless to use any Arguments to persuade you to it; for if ye will not hearken to what Christ Himself desires of you, much less will you regard any thing that I can say unto you. But in this also I shall not speak in my own Name, but His; and in his Stead

Stead pray you to consider; first, who it is that desires this of you : Not I, your Fellow-Worm, but Christ Himself; Christ, the Eternal Son of GOD, the Only-Begotten of the Father, the Lord GOD Almighty : *Christ, who being in the Form of GOD, thought it no Robbery to be equal to GOD,* and yet for your Sakes made Himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant : Christ, who being thus found in Fashion as a Man, really and truly Man as well as GOD, became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, and all to appease the Wrath of GOD, and reconcile him to you : Christ, who is now at the Right Hand of the Father, and is made Head over all things for the Church, that nothing may hinder their Reconciliation to GOD, who apply themselves to him, and do what he requires in order to it. This is that Christ, who requires you to do what ye have now heard : And will ye not do any thing ye can for him, who hath done and suffer'd so much for you ? For Him who lov'd you so as to lay down his own Life for you ? Surely you can never deny him any thing, much less when he desires nothing of you, but only that you would be reconciled to GOD. This is the only End of all he did for Mankind upon Earth, the End of all that he is now doing in Heaven, and
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the End of his sending me at this time to solicit, and pray you in his Stead to do it. And if ye still stand out and refuse to come in upon his most Gracious Advice and Request, what Favour can ye ever expect from him? None, certainly! He will be so far from shewing you any Kindness, so far from saving you from your Sins, and from the Wrath of GOD, that he hath told you beforehand what he will say to you; *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof, I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh,* Prov. i. 24, 25, 26.

And your Calamity will most certainly come e're long, whether ye fear it or no; greater Calamity than ye are aware of, greater than ye can yet imagine. For consider in the next Place, that until ye are reconciled to GOD, as you are Enemies to him, so he is an Enemy to you: He that made you is angry with you, he is incensed against you. And who can imagine the dismal Effects and Consequents of his Displeasure? If his Wrath be kindled, yea but a little, who is able to stand before it? The Thoughts of it are sufficient to make the stoutest Heart amongst us tremble. To have *Jehovah*, the Lord of Hosts, the Supreme

preme Governour of the VVorld; To have him angry with us, who can think of it without Horror and Amazement? VVho then can describe the deplorable Condition which they are in, that lie under his Displeasure? For my part, I am so far from being able to give you a Description, that I dread the very Thoughts of it. Only we know in general, that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living G O D*; That all that he continues to be angry at, will most certainly do so, and by Consequence be as miserable as it is possible for them to be. For so long as He who governs all Things in the VVorld is angry with you, there is nothing in it can do you good, nothing but what will contribute some way or other to your Ruin and Destruction. All Things are cursed to you, those also which you think to be Blessings. And all the Judgments that G O D hath threatned in his VVord against Sinners, seeing he is angry with you, stand ready every Moment to fall upon you. And if he should once open your Eyes, to see him frowning upon you, you would not be able to endure yourselves, but would wish with all your Souls, you could cease to be, or be any thing rather than what you are, *the Vessels of Wrath fitted for Destruction.*
But

But all in vain. All the World cannot help you, unless he that made and governs it be reconciled to you ; but ye must be punished *with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day,* 2 Theff. 1. 9, 10. When ye will be cast into Hell-fire, *where the Worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,* Mark 9. 44.

If these things were laid to your Hearts as they ought to be, they would make you very restless and uneasie, until you have made your Peace with GOD, and done all that ye have heard to be requir'd in order to your Reconciliation to Him. And how happy would you then be? As happy in the Love and Favour of GOD, as the other are miserable under his Wrath and Fury. For when you are at peace with GOD, all things else will be at peace with you. He that made them, will make them to be so: *You shall be in league with the Stones of the Field, and the Beasts of the Field shall be at peace with you,* Job 5. 23. Yea, *when a Man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at peace with him,* Prov. 16. 7. And not only they, but all things else shall work together for
your

your Good, so long as ye continue in his Favour, who governs and disposeth of all things as he pleaseth. For when ye are reconciled to him, he will look upon you as his Friends, his Favourites, his Children, and will deal accordingly with you. He will take you into his own particular Care and Conduct. He will hide you under his Wings, that no Evil may come near to hurt you. He will bless and sanctifie all Occurrences to you. He will provide all things necessary, that as you have nothing that is evil, so ye may want nothing that is good for you. He will cause the Light of his Countenance to shine upon you, and manifest his special Love and Favour to you, that you may see him smiling upon you, rejoycing over you, and delighting to do you good: In which blessed Sight our Happiness chiefly consisteth. He will guide you by his Counsel, assist you by his Grace, protect you by his Power, enlighten, quicken, actuate, support, and strengthen you by his Holy Spirit, that you may pass thro' all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, so as to come at last to live with him and his holy Angels, in the perfect Vision and Fruition of his eternal Godhead.

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But

But what do I mean, to offer at describing the Happiness of those who are reconciled to GOD? When to be in his Favour, is itself the greatest Happiness that a Creature is capable of, and such as none can apprehend but they who have it. Yet this is that Happiness which the Eternal Son of GOD hath purchased for Mankind, and sends his Ambassadors about to invite them to it. It is in his Name I come to all that are here present at this time, and *pray you in his stead, Be ye all now reconciled unto GOD*; Now, while ye may. Blessed be GOD, ye all may as yet be reconciled to Him, if ye will but take the Course for it, which hath been now described to you out of his Holy Word. Otherwise, He would not have sent me to call upon you, nor brought you hither to be called upon to do it; but if ye turn your Backs, and refuse or neglect to hearken to Him now, ye know not whether He will ever call upon you any more. Wherefore I pray you again in his stead, put off this great Work no longer, but begin it now. *For why will ye die?* Why will ye destroy your selves, when ye need not? Why will ye continue any longer under the Displeasure of Almighty GOD, when
ye

ye may be restored to his Favour, if ye will but seek it? But then ye must seek it in his own way, in the constant Use of the Means which He hath appointed, whereby to obtain his Grace and Assistance, to do what is requir'd of you. What they are ye all know: And therefore I need say no more. But as I have now prayed you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to GOD, so in his Name I pray GOD to be reconciled to you, and to *open your Eyes that ye may see the things that belong to your everlasting Peace, before they be hid from you.*



SERMON XII.

2 C O R. xiii. 14.

*The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and
the Love of G O D, and the Communion
of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*

IT would be great rashness in us who know so little of our own, to enquire into the Nature of Him that made us, any further than He himself hath been pleased to make it known unto us in his Holy Word. But it would be the height of impudence and presumption to offer at explaining the incomprehensible Mystery of the most Glorious Trinity; How three distinct Persons subsist in the same individual Nature, so as to be all one and the same G O D. It is sufficient for us to believe what is written, that there is but One Living and True G O D; that *the Lord our GOD is one Jehovah*, one Being, the Lord, *Deut. 6. 4.* That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, these

these Three are one Being, one Jehovah, one God: That the Father is of himself, the Son of the Father, the Holy Ghost of the Father and the Son, and yet *none before or after other: none greater or less than another; but the whole three Persons co-eternal together and co-equal*, This we are bound to believe, because it is revealed by G O D himself, and therefore revealed by Him, that we may believe it upon His Word, altho' it be above the reach of our finite Understandings, as He himself knows it is: And therefore doth not require us to understand, but to believe it; and hath made known as much of it as he thought good, for that purpose only, that we might know what He would have us to believe concerning it.

Now, one very remarkable thing reveal'd in the Holy Scriptures concerning the most Glorious Trinity, is this, That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, although they be all one and the same G O D, yet they often exert and manifest Themselves and Their Divine Perfections severally, as well as joyntly, and so have their several ways of Working in the World: As appears from many places, and particularly from the Words I have now read; *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of GOD, and the Communion of Holy Ghost be with you all.* For here

we have three Divine Persons distinctly named : The Son, called the Lord, as he commonly is, the Lord Jesus Christ ; the Father, here called in an especial manner God, as being the Root and Fountain of the Deity, as the Primitive Writers stile him ; and then here is the third Person, expressly called the Holy Ghost. And to each of these Persons, here is a several Property or Perfection attributed, the Apostle wishing to the *Corinthians*, the *Grace of one*, the *Love of another*, and the *Communion of the third* ; which does not only shew that they are three distinct Persons or Subsistences, but also that they have distinct Operations, or their several ways of Working, and manifesting themselves in the World. Which if rightly understood, would give us great light into what we ought to believe concerning each Person ; and how we ought to exercise our Faith upon all and every one of them, according to the Discoveries which they are pleased to make of themselves, with respect to us. And therefore I shall endeavour to explain it as clearly as I can, being a Matter of so high a nature : Humbly beseeching Him, of whom I speak, so to assist and direct me, that I may say nothing but what is agreeable to His Holy Word, and becoming His Divine Majesty.

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For this purpose therefore, we must, *First*, consider in general, that this Almighty, most Glorious and Eternal Being, which we call **GOD**, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, hath been graciously pleased to shew forth and manifest Himself and His Divine Perfections many wonderful ways, particularly in the Creation and Redemption of the World. In the first he manifested his Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; in the other His Infinite Love, and Justice, and Mercy, and Truth to Mankind : In both the Infinite Glory of His Eternal Godhead. And it is much to be observed, that in both these great Works that He hath done, whereby to set forth His Glory, we find three distinct Persons specified or particularly named by Himself, as concurring in the doing of them, and each in a way peculiar to Himself. The Account that He himself hath given us of His Creation or trodution of all things out of Nothing, begins thus, *In the Beginning G O D created the Heaven and the Earth*. Where the word in the Original **אֱלֹהִים** which we translate **G O D**, is of the Plural Number ; but it is joyned with a **Verb** of the Singular, as it is almost every-where in the Old Testament. Now although I will not say, that an Argument can be drawn from hence to convince a Gain-sayer, that there are just three

Persons in the Godhead, because a word of the Plural Number may possibly signifie more : Yet seeing that in *Hebrew*, where there is likewise a Dual, Three is the first Plural Number : And seeing the first must in reason be preferr'd before all other : And seeing GOD himself hath in many places of His Word acquainted us that there are three Persons and no more in his Godhead ; we may reasonably from hence infer, that GOD calleth himself by this Name of the Plural, and joyns it with Verbs and Adjectives of the Singular Number, on purpose to put us in mind of the Trinity in Unity, that He is Three in One, and that every one of these Divine Persons is to be adored and worshipped alike ; that being, as I take it, the true notion of the word. For though the Root from whence *אלה Eloah* comes, be not preserv'd in the *Hebrew* Tongue, it is in the *Arabick* Dialect. Where *الله Al-laba*, signifies to Worship or Adore : And accordingly *אלה Eloah*, signifies one that is to be worshipped : And in the Plural Number *אלהים Elobim*, Persons adorable, such as are and ought to be worshipped by all things that are, as He, to be sure, ought to be, by whom all things were made, and were made by Him for that End, that He might be worshipped by them. And it is very observable, that in the next Chapter, when

when the Creation was finished, he is called by two names, **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**, the one of the Singular Number, the other of the Plural ; the one signifying his Essence, the other the Persons subsisting in it. But in all the first Chapter of *Genesis*, while He was doing this Great Work, He is not so much as once called by any other name than **אֱלֹהִים** *Adorandi*, or *Adorabiles*, Persons to be adored ; but by that He is called above thirty times in that one Chapter : Whereby I humbly conceive He hath signified his pleasure to us, that when we consider his Creation of the World, we should ascribe it to all the three Persons, and adore them for it. And indeed that they were all concern'd in it, appears from the History of the Creation itself : Wherein although the Creator, as I have shewn, be all along called **אֱלֹהִים**, *Elohim*, Divine Persons in the Plural Number ; yet that name being as constantly there joyn'd with a Verb of the Singular Number, the Unity of the Divine Nature or Godhead, is likewise signified by it. In which sense it is said in the second Verse ; *And the Spirit of GOD moved upon the Face of the Waters* : that is, the Spirit of that One GOD who is *Elohim*, Divine Persons ; Of which the Spirit here spoken of must needs be one, forasmuch as He operates in the Creation, which none but GOD
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S E R M O N XII.

the Creator could do. So that we have here two distinct Persons, the Spirit of GOD, and GOD himself, whose Spirit He is, even the Father, who, as I observed before, is in an especial manner often called GOD.

After this we read, that GOD made all things by his Word. *He said, let there be Light, and there was Light*, v. 3. and so He made his Works all the six Days, until He came to make Man, He made them all by his Word : Not by any outward Word spoken, but by speaking in himself, by willing them to be, and so by his inward, his essential Word ; that is, by his Eternal and Only-begotten Son, as we are fully assured by his Evangelist St John ; who by his direction begins the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, with this Character of Him : *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with GOD, and the Word was GOD. The same was in the Beginning with GOD. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made*, Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3. And to the same purpose St Paul speaking of the Son of GOD, saith, *By Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in the Earth, visible or invisible ; whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers : All things were created by Him,*
and

and for Him, Col. 1. 16. Eph. 3. 9. And elsewhere, *By whom He made the Worlds*, Heb. 1. 2. From all which it appears, that the Word by which G O D made the World, was his only Son, then with Him. If his Son, then a Person, and if with Him, then a distinct Person from Him. So that now we plainly see Three distinct Persons manifesting Themselves in the Creation of the World, G O D the Father, his Son, and his Spirit. As the Royal Prophet also long ago observed, saying, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath (or Spirit) of his mouth*, Psal. 33. 6.

To this we may add that remarkable Passage which occurs in the Formation of Man, as both explaining and confirming all that hath been hitherto said. For upon the sixth or last Day of the Creation, when G O D was pleased to make Man, it is written ; *And G O D said, let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness*, Gen. 1. 26. In the Original it is, וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, And GOD in the Plural Number, said, in the Singular : He said, let *Us* make Man ; and let *Us* make him in *Our* Image, after *Our* Likeness ; still in the Plural Number. Which shews us plainly as words can do it, that several Persons concurred in this great Work ; and that they had all one
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and the same Image and Likeness, and therefore were of one and the same Nature or Essence. Neither can the words possibly bear any other sense. All that the *Jews* and *Socinians* have said upon them according to their blasphemous Doctrine, makes them downright nonsense ; whereas, according to our Christian Doctrine, nothing is more plain and easie. For when the most Blessed Trinity was pleased to make Man, the Chief and Lord of all earthly Creatures, He did not say as in the making of other Creatures, Let there be a Man, but let Us, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, make Man ; and let Us make him as like unto Ourselves, who are all of the same Likeness, as a Creature can be made. All which might be, as in effect it was, most truly and properly said, according to our common way of speaking : Whereas, if there were not several Divine Persons then in Being, or but only One, to whom could GOD say, let Us make Man ; who but a Divine Person could do such a work ? Or how could He say, let *Us* make him in *Our* Image, after *Our* Likeness, if there was only one Person in the World, in whose Image and Likeness he could be made ? No, all the Wit of Man, and of the Devil himself, can never invalidate the invincible Force of

of this place, to prove that there were several Divine Persons of the same Divine Essence, that severally exerted and discovered themselves in the Creation of the World in general, and particularly in the Making of Mankind.

And as it was in the Creation, so it was likewise in the Redemption of Mankind. The World was made by the Word of GOD; and it was redeemed by the same Word, the Son of GOD, the Second of the Divine Persons, which *St. John* calls *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*, 1 Joh. 5. 7. All which, as I have shewn, cooperated in the making of Man at first; and so they did too in the saving or redeeming him, when he was fallen from the State in which he was at first made. For whereas there were two most critical times appointed for the effecting our Redemption: One for the Incarnation of our Redeemer when the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us in order to it; and the other for his Baptism, when He was initiated as it were into it, and actually took this great Work upon Him. At both these times we find all the Persons of the most Glorious Trinity particularly mentioned, as concerned in it.

As for the First, when the Fulness of time was come, that the Son of GOD should be incarnate, GOD sent the Angel
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Gabriel to acquaint the Blessed Virgin, that He should be conceived and born of her: And among other things saith unto her, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the highest shall over-shadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, Luk. 1.35.* Upon the saying of which Words, and the blessed Virgin's expressing her consent by saying, *Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word;* This great Work was done, the Son of GOD was conceiv'd in her, the *Word was made Flesh*. Now here we see three Divine Persons concurring in this wonderful Work. The Son of GOD, the Holy Ghost or Spirit of GOD, and the Highest, or the Father, whose Son the one, and whose Spirit or Power the other is. One was conceived: He was conceived by another, and that other was the Power of a Third Person. So that in this the first thing that was actually done in order to our Redemption, and upon which the whole Work depended; the whole Three Persons in the most Blessed Trinity, were most graciously pleased to shew themselves; The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One GOD, Blessed for ever.

And so they did likewise most wonderfully at the Baptism of our Redeemer, when he was solemnly inaugurated into the Of-

Office he had undertaken for us, and accordingly began to set about it. For it is written, *And Jesus when he was Baptized, went up straight-way out of the Water, and lo, the Heavens were open'd unto him; and he saw the Spirit of GOD, descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him; and Lo, a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* Matt. 3. 16, 17. Here all the Three Persons of the most Holy Trinity, did evidently appear together. For here was a Voice from Heaven saying, *This is my Beloved Son*, which could be no other but the Voice of the Father, who also declared himself to be so, by calling the other his Son: And then here was the Son of this Father, declared to be so by the Father himself: And here was also the Spirit of GOD, descending like a Dove, and lighting upon the Son, and so Anointing him to be both a Priest, a Prophet and a King; who is therefore most properly called the *Messiah*, or *Christ*, the Anointed of GOD, and every way qualified to be our Mediator and Redeemer. Yea, it is wonderful to observe, these Three infinitely Glorious Incomprehensible Persons were pleased upon this extraordinary Occasion to manifest themselves severally to the very Senses of Men, to their Eyes and Ears: For the Father was heard speaking, the Son was
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seen in the Nature of Man coming out of the Water ; and the Holy Ghost was seen in the shape of a Dove descending and lighting upon him. And therefore we may truly say with *S^t Augustine*, that at this time, *Apparuit manifestissima Trinitas, Pater in voce, Filius in homine, Spiritus Sanctus in columbâ* : The Trinity appeared most manifestly ; the Father in a Voice, the Son in a Man, the Holy Ghost in a Dove, *Aug. in Evang. Job. tract. 6.* And with *S^t Hierome*, *Mysterium Trinitatis in Baptismate demonstratur : Dominus Baptizatur, Spiritus descendit in specie columbæ ; Patris vox testimonium filio perhibentis, auditur.* The Mystery of the Trinity is demonstrated in the Baptism of Christ : The Lord is Baptized : The Spirit descendeth in the likeness of a Dove ; the Voice of Father giving Testimony to the Son, is heard, *Hieron. in Matt. 3.* And hence it is that this Chapter is appointed as a Proper Lesson at Morning-Prayer upon *Trinity-Sunday*, because the great Mystery which we this Day Celebrate, is so plainly and fully reveal'd in it.

And it is much to be observ'd, that as all the Three Divine Persons, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, thus manifested themselves at the Baptism of our Saviour ; so he himself requires, that all who would be his Disciples, should be made so by being

ing Baptized in the Name of all the same Persons, saying to his Apostles, *Go ye therefore and teach, or make, all Nations my Disciples, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* Matt. 28. 19. So that the same Divine Persons, which so manifestly appeared at the Baptism of Christ, are all to be particularly named at the Baptism of every Christian, by Christ's own Institution. And no Man can be initiated into the Church of Christ, and so made a Christian any other way, but by being so Baptized: This being the only way appointed by Christ himself for that purpose. Who thereby hath sufficiently declared, that he will own none for his Disciples but such as are Baptized in the name of all the same Persons which appear'd in so miraculous a manner, when he himself was Baptized: And also that our Salvation depends upon, and must be attributed unto all of them. For seeing he himself hath so order'd it, that none can be brought into a State of Salvation but by being first Baptized in the Name of all Three, all Three must needs be acknowledg'd to concur in the effecting of it.

And verily that they do so, appears most evidently also from the Words of my Text. For as all these Divine Persons manifested themselves in the Creation of the World in general, and at the making of Man

in particular : As they appear'd at the Incarnation and Baptism of our Redeemer ; and as our Redeemer himself requires that all who would partake of that Redemption which he hath purchased, should be Baptized in the Name of all Three : So the Apostle here by his Direction, writing to such as were so Baptized at *Corinth*, and concluding his Epistle to them with an hearty Prayer, that they might have all things necessary to their Salvation, he refers all such things to three Heads, and Attributes them severally to the Three Persons in the most Holy Trinity, and accordingly prays to each of them, saying, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.* So that did we but understand these Words aright, we should thereby know how to exercise our Faith in all, and each of these Divine Persons, for what is necessary to our obtaining Eternal Salvation, according to their several ways of concurring to it.

But for that purpose, before we enter upon the Explication of the several Parts of the Text, it will be necessary to observe some things in general about it. As first, altho' here be Three several Persons named, and several Properties are severally attributed to them, yet they are not several, but all One and the same individual

dual GOD. This we are fully assur'd of by all those Reasons, and by all such Places of the Holy Scriptures, which demonstrate the Unity of the Godhead. As where it is said, *Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, (our Elobim in the plural Number) is one Lord, one Jehovah, Deut. 6. 4.* This the Son asserts of the Father and Himself, saying, *I and the Father are one, John 10. 30.* Not *ἑῖς* but *ἓν ἑσμεν*, one Jehovah, one Being. And St *John* of all three, *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are one, 1 John 5. 7.* Where the same Word is used again, *ἓν ἦν, unum sunt*, they are, in the Plural Number; but they are One in the Singular; One Being, *יהוה אחד* One Jehovah, One GOD.

Hence, in the next place, whatsoever Perfections or Properties (except such as are purely personal) are attributed to any of these Divine Persons, are the same in all, and may equally be attributed to every one, they being all and every one the same GOD, in whom all Perfections concenter, or rather, who is all Perfection itself. And therefore, when we read of the Grace of one, the Love of another, and the Fellowship of the third Divine Person, it is not to be so understood, as if these Properties were so peculiar to those Persons to which they are here attributed, that they do not

belong also to the other. For they are the same in all, and may be equally attributed to one as well as another. And so they are in the Holy Scriptures. Here Grace is ascribed to the Son, and Love unto the Father: In other places, Love is ascribed to the Son, and Grace unto the Father. As where St Paul saith, *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* Rom. 8. 35. *And to know the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge,* Ephes. 3. 19. And St John, *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, (the Son) because he laid down his Life for us,* 1 John 3. 16. Here Love is plainly attributed to the Son: And so is Grace to the Father, where St Paul saith, *By the Grace of GOD I am what I am,* 1 Cor. 13. 10. And, *not by fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of GOD, we have had our Conversation in the World,* 2 Cor. 1. 12. And as we here read of the Communion, or Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, we elsewhere read of the Fellowship of the Son. GOD is faithful, saith the Apostle, *by whom ye were called unto the Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,* 1 Cor. 1. 9. And St John saith, *Truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,* 1 John 1. 3. Which I therefore observe, lest any should think, that we detract any thing from one Person, by attributing it to another. For whatsoever Divine Properties are attributed to any one, are thereby attri-

attributed unto all: They being all one and the same GOD, in whom all Properties also are one and the same Property; And therefore cannot be divided, nor belong to one more than to another, as they are in him.

But then we must observe withal, that notwithstanding this, when this Almighty Being, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is pleased to operate upon things without Him, and so to exert, and manifest himself to us, there is something particular attributed to one of these Divine Persons, more than to another. As it is plain, that it was not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, but the Son, which took the Nature of Man upon him. It was not the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Ghost, which at the Creation of the World moved upon the Face of the Waters; which at the Incarnation of Christ, overshadowed the Blessed Virgin, and which, upon the Day of Pentecost, came down upon the Apostles. Thus, all along in the Holy Scriptures, the Father is said in a peculiar manner to be our Maker, the Son our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier. And accordingly in my Text, where the Three Persons are all mention'd together with respect to us, the Apostle prays for something particular from each of them; for the Love of the Father, as He is the Maker and Governour of the World; For the

Grace of the Son, as he is the Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind ; And for the Communion of the Holy Ghost, as He is the Sanctifier and Comforter of all the Elect People of GOD. Which will serve us as a Key to open the whole Mystery contain'd in these Words ; as we shall see more presently.

But here is still another thing to be observ'd in general ; which is, That the Son is here plac'd before the Father, whereas Reason may seem to require that the Father should be placed first ; as He is by the Son himself, commanding Baptism to be administered in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; and by his beloved Disciple, saying, *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*, Matth. 28. 19. 1 John 5. 7. According to which Order, the Apostle should have said, *The Love of GOD the Father, and the Grace of Jesus Christ* ; whereas, he contrarywise puts the Son first, saying, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of GOD* ; Which being done by the special Direction of the Holy Ghost, there was certainly great Reason for it. Which that we may rightly understand, we must take notice, that in the Places before-quoted, the Divine Persons are named in their essential Order, that which they have in, and among themselves, or with Respect to one another : According to which, the Father

ther is placed first, because He begot the Son: The Son is placed second, because He was begotten of the Father: And the Holy Ghost last, because He proceeds from both. But the Apostle in my Text, speaks not of the Order of the Divine Persons among themselves, but of that which they observe with respect to us and our Salvation. He here wisheth to the *Corinthians*, all things necessary to their Salvation by Christ: And therefore it was necessary that he should begin first with Christ their Saviour, without whom they could never have had either the Love of GOD, or the Communion of the Holy Ghost. It is true, the Love of GOD the Father, was the first Cause or Motive of our Salvation, as our Saviour himself hath taught us, saying, *That GOD so loved the World, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. But then we must observe, that our Saviour speaks here of GOD's Love to Mankind in general, saying, *GOD so loved the World*: He doth not speak of his Love to particular Men. It was out of his infinite Love to Fallen Man in general, that He sent his Son into the World; but his Love to any particular Man, is only in, and for the Sake of his said Son, and no otherwise. For by Nature, we are all Enemies to GOD, and therefore He is so to us. And

there is no way for us to be reconcil'd to Him, or to have Him reconcil'd to us, but by his Son. For, as the Apostle saith, *When we were Enemies, we were reconcil'd to God by the Death of his Son*, Rom. 5. 10. And if it be by his Son only that we are reconcil'd to GOD, it must needs be only by His Son, that we can have His Love and Favour : Which He therefore never shews to any Man, but only upon the Account of *him in whom he is well pleased*. But as the Apostle saith, *Nothing can separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 39. Whereby we are given to understand, that the Love which GOD the Father hath for any of us, is only in his Son, and for his Sake, without whom we could expect nothing but Wrath and Vengeance from Him : And by consequence, that the Grace of Christ is most properly here placed before the Love of GOD, seeing we cannot have this, unless we have that first. The same may be said also of the Communion of the Holy Ghost : For that likewise is *shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Lord*, as the same Apostle teacheth us, Tit. 3. 5. Wherefore, seeing that we can never have either the Love of GOD the Father, or the Communion of GOD the Holy Ghost, but only by the Grace of GOD the Son, there was all the Reason in the World that the Apostle should pray for this first, and say

and say first, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*; then, *the Love of God*; and lastly, *the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.*

These things being thus premised in general, we shall easily discover the Meaning of the several Parts of the Text. The first thing which the Apostle here wisheth to the *Corinthians*, is, *the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is a Phrase he delights in very much; The common Salutation that he useth at the beginning of every one of his thirteen Epistles, to those he wrote to, runs thus, *Grace be to you, and Peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* And at the End of his Epistles, he sometimes saith in short, *Grace be with you*, Col. 4. 18. Tit. 3. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 22. But most usually he concludes with, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, Rom. 15. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. Gal. 6. 18. Phil. 4. 23. 1 Thess. 5. 28. 2 Thess. 3. 18. Philem. v. 25. And so *S^t John* concludes the Book of Revelations, and the whole New Testament, Apoc. 22. 21. From whence we may infer, that Grace is to be had only by Christ, that His Grace is the greatest Blessing that can be desir'd, and that where the Grace of Christ is, there is also the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, which are therefore particularly mention'd in my Text, that we may know from
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whence they come, and that they are to be understood, wheresoever the Grace of Christ is mention'd.

But then the Question is, what is meant by the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? And how it comes to be so often appropriated unto him? For which it will be necessary to consider that remarkable Passage in the Gospel of St *John*, where he having asserted the Eternal and Divine Nature of the Word or Son of GOD, he saith: *And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father) full of Grace and Truth.—And of his Fulness have all we receiv'd, and Grace for Grace. For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1. 14, 16, 17.* Here we see first, that the Word or Son of GOD was made Flesh, that is, he took upon him the Nature of Man in general, so as to become *Immanuel*, GOD with us, GOD and Man in one Person; and as such, he is here said to be full of Grace and Truth: Where by Grace, I do not question but we are to understand, that which in the Old Testament is called חסד *Mercy*, These two חסד ואמת *Mercy and Truth*, being very frequently put together, and Mercy always before Truth. As where it is said, *All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth, Psalm 25. 10. Mercy and Truth are met together,* Psal.

Pfal. 85. 10. *By Mercy and Truth Sin is purged*, Prov. 16. 6. *Mercy and Truth preserve the King*, Prov. 20. 28. *Thus they are joyned together*, Gen. 32. 10. 2 Sam. 2. 6. c. 15. 20. Psal. 36. 5. and 40. 11. and 57. 3. 10. and 61. 7. and 89. 1, 2, 14. and 115. 1. and 138. 2. and 98. 3. and 100. 5. and 117. 2. Prov. 3. 3. c. 14. 22. *Thus GOD proclaimeth Himself to be abundant in Goodness and Truth*, Exod. 34. 6. where the Word which we translate Goodness, is the same which in the Places before-quoted, is render'd Mercy, and so it is rightly translated in that Parallel Place: *But thou, O Lord, art a GOD full of Compassion, and Gracious; Long-suffering and Plenteous in Mercy and Truth*, Psal. 85. 15. And accordingly GOD the Son as Incarnate, is here said to be full of Grace, or Mercy, and Truth. *And of his Fulness*, saith St John, *all we have received*. We have none but what we receive from him, and how much soever we receive, he is still full: As the Sun is still full of Light, notwithstanding that we continually receive and enjoy it. Neither do we only receive of his Fulness in general, but we receive Grace for Grace, that is, all Manner of Grace, according to that Fulness which is in him. In him is the Fulness and Perfection of all Grace and Mercy: And for that it is in him our Head, we of him receive whatsoever Grace or Mercy we have occasion for.

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And the Reason is, because, as it here follows, *the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* The Law as given by *Moses* threatned Death and Damnation, even all Manner of Judgment without Mercy, to all that continued not in all things written in it. Which no Man having done, all are by the Law condemn'd to die, and suffer all the Punishments which are there threatned, without any Hopes of Mercy, there being none there promis'd. But as the Law was thus given by *Moses*, Grace, or Mercy and Truth came, *ἐγένετο*, was made by Jesus Christ, as the Author and Procurer of it. The Law hath concluded all under Sin, and therefore hath passed the Sentence of Condemnation upon all. And if the Sentence be ever revoked or omitted, or if it be not actually executed, it must be acknowledg'd to be a great Mercy. But there is no such Mercy promised in the Law given by *Moses*: There is not a Word of that there, nor any-where else, but only in the Gospel of Christ; who having in our Nature undergone the Punishments, to which we are condemn'd by the Law, he hath thereby made way for Mercy to be shewn us, by GOD's accepting of his Death in Stead of ours, and so acquitting or discharging us from it: Yea he hath thereby merited or purchased Mercy for us, all Manner of Mercy, in that his Death was of infinitely more Value, than all
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ours could ever have been. For that GOD is never merciful to any but only for the Sake of his Son, and upon the Account of his Death, is plain from his never shewing any Mercy, but only to those for whom Christ dy'd. The fallen Angels stand in as much need of Mercy as fallen Man, but they never had nor ever will have any, because Christ did not die for them. But he having taken our Nature upon him, and in it suffer'd the Punishments, which by the Law were due to us, GOD is graciously pleas'd for his Sake to promise Grace or Mercy to us; and whatsoever Grace or Mercy we receive from him, it comes to us only by Jesus Christ: As the Holy Ghost here assures us, saying, *that Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*. It was in him that Grace was at first promised to us, and it is in him that such Promises are verified or fulfilled. For, as the Apostle saith, *all the Promises of GOD in him are yea, and in him Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. that is, in Him they were all made, and in him they are all confirmed and performed to us. And therefore Truth is not here oppos'd as it is commonly thought, only to the Types and Figures of the Law, but it signifies more especially the Truth and Certainty of the Promises, which GOD hath made to Mankind of Grace and Mercy in his Son. And that is the Reason, that Mercy, as I observ'd before, is not only here, but all
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along in the Holy Scriptures, put before Truth : Because Mercy is first promised, and then truly granted according to that Promise, and both by Christ. It was by by Him that Grace was at first promised to us, and it is by Him that the Truth of such Promises is assured to us, and so both *Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*, vid. *Psf. 89. 33, 34, 49.*

From hence we may gather, what is here meant, by *the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, in my Text. It is the Grace, the free, undeserved Favour and Mercy ; it is the Grace of the Lord, the Almighty G O D, the Eternal and Only-begotten Son, of the same Substance and Glory with the Father ; it is the Grace of the Lord Jesus, the most High G O D made Man, and so become Jesus, a Saviour to save his People from their Sins : It is the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, of G O D our Saviour, anointed to be to us a Prophet, Priest, and King, and so fully qualified, and able to do all things necessary for our Salvation. And therefore all such things are here signified by the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ : All things that are required, all things that can any way conduce to our Eternal Salvation ; They are all contain'd in, and they all proceed from his Grace and Mercy to us, without whom we can neither have, nor do any thing at all towards it. But by him, there is nothing

thing but we may have, nothing but we can do, that he would have us, in order to our being saved. By him we are called out of Darknes into his marvellous Light, Rom. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9. By Him we have Grace to Repent, and turn every one from his own Iniquities, so that Sin shall not have Dominion over us, seeing we are not under the Law but under Grace. Act. 5. 31. c. 3. 26. Rom. 6. 14. By Him we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace, Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Eph. 4. 32. By Him we are justified freely through his Grace, and accounted Righteous before GOD Himself, Rom. 3. 24. Tit. 3. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 21. By Him being justified by Faith we have Peace with God, and are as perfectly reconciled unto him, as if he had never been angry or displeased with us, Rom. 5. 1, 10. By Him we have Power to become the Sons of God, and if Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with him who is appointed Heir of all Things, Joh. 1. 12. Rom. 8. 17. Heb. 1. 2. By Him we are washed from our Sins in his own Blood, and are made Kings and Priests to God and his Father, Rev. 1. 5, 6. By Him we can overcome the World, and triumph over Death itself, 1 Joh. 5. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 15. 57. By Him we can do, and by Him we can suffer whatsoever God sees good to lay upon us: For his Grace is alway sufficient for us, and his strength made per-

perfect in our weakness, so that we can do all things thro' Christ which strengthens us, 2 Cor. 12. 9. Phil. 4. 13. By Him we have a Place prepared for us in Heaven, that where he is there we may be also, to behold his Glory, and be glorified together with him, John 14. 2, 3. c. 17. 24. Rom. 8. 17. In short, By him we may have every thing that is any way necessary, either to the Beginning, the carrying on, or the perfecting our Salvation ; For he is able to save to the utmost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them, Heb. 7. 25. All these things we have by Christ, and receive them of that Infinite Grace and Mercy that is in him. And therefore the Apostle wishing to the Corinthians, The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, he thereby wished them every thing relating to their Eternal Salvation, as coming wholly and solely from his Grace and Mercy.

The next thing that follows in my Text, is, *the Love of G O D.* And it may well follow upon, *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* here, for it doth so every-where. For He, the Eternal Son of G O D, having, as I have shewn, reconciled us to his Father wheresoever his Grace is, the Love of the Father follows in course, who being always well-pleased with his Son, in him is also well-pleased with all that partake of him ; and hath a special Love for them : The Love of a Father to his

his Children, who is not only most tenderly affected towards them, but takes particular care of them, provides all things necessary for them, corrects them when they do amiss, encourages them when they do well, and settles a sufficient maintenance upon them, that they may live comfortably in the World, according to every one's Estate and Quality. Such is the Love of the Great God to those, who by the Grace of Christ are made his Children. He keeps them always under his own Care and Conduct: He gives them all Things necessary both for Life and Godliness: He chasteneth them, not for his own Pleasure, but for their Profit, that they may be Partakers of His Holiness: He plentifully rewards all the Services they perform him in this World: And in the next he settles a Kingdom upon every one of them, the Kingdom of Heaven itself, where they ever live as happily as it is possible for Creatures to live: And all because he loves them as his own Children by Adoption, and the Grace of his Only-begotten Son.

This therefore is here meant by the Love of GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in him our GOD, and our Father. It is the Love of GOD as he is the Maker, Preserver and Governour of the whole World, and orders and disposeth of all things in it, according to his own Will and Pleasure; and therefore as for his own Glory, so likewise for the good of these he lives and is well-pleased with. For we know saith the Apostle,

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That all things work together for good to them that love GOD, to them who are called according to his purpose, Rom. 8. 28. All that love GOD, GOD loves: And seeing He loves them, He makes all things concur to their Advantage. For which purpose by his good Providence he makes them of such a Temper as will best suit with the Circumstances he designs for them, or else orders their Circumstances so as will best suit with the Temper he made them of: He measures out such a Proportion of the good things of this Life to them, as he knows will be good for them, and no more. He allots them such a Place to live in upon Earth, where they may enjoy the Means whereby to obtain Grace and Salvation by his Son. He keeps them from falling into any Evil, and all Evil from falling upon them. He defends them from all their Enemies, or else turns their Hearts and makes them to become their Friends. He infatuates the Counsels, and defeats all the ill Designs that Men or Devils can form against them. He hears the Prayers they put up unto Him in his Sons Name, and for his Sake accepts of all the Duties they perform to Him. He is with them wheresoever they are, to direct, assist, and prosper them in whatsoever they do: He Sanctifieth and Blesseth all manner of Occurrences to them, so that every thing which happens, is, all things considered, the best that could happen to them. There are many, I may truly say, innumerable such Instances of
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the Love which GOD the Father is pleased for his Son's Sake, to manifest to those who are regenerate and so made his Children in him, even by his ordinary Providence : And where that fails, he is pleased to do it in an extraordinary and miraculous manner : As we see in the Children of *Israel*, for he having a special Love for them, by reason of their near Relation to his Son incarnate, he brought them into and out of *Egypt* ; he led them, he fed them, he cloathed them, with Miracles for 40 Years together. *And all because he loved them, as it is said, Deut. 4. 37. chap. 7. 7, 8.* And particularly, when *Balaam* was hired to curse them, *God turned his Curse into a Blessing, because he loved them, Deut. 23. 5.*

Thus he one way or other always preserves those he loves from all things that may hurt them, and witholds nothing from them that will really do them good : But he carries them through all the changes and chances of this Mortal Life, so as to bring them at last to Heaven, where they clearly see his Love in every thing that ever befel them, continually Praise and Adore Him for it, and are Eternally happy in the perfect Enjoyment of it. From all which it appears, how great a Blessing it is, to have the Love of GOD the Father, the Almighty Creator and Governour of all things, how necessarily it follows upon the Grace of His Only-Begotten Son; and by consequence, with how great Reason as well as Charity to the *Corinthians*, the Apostle here,

next to the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, prays they might have the Love of GOD.

And that their Happiness might be compleat, he adds also ; The Communion of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person in the most Blessed Trinity ; called the Ghost or Spirit both of the Father and the Son, because he proceeds from both : And Holy in a peculiar manner, because all the Holiness that is in the Creatures, proceeds from him. And to have Communion or Fellowship with him, is to partake of his Holiness, and of all the Glorious Effects of the Grace of Christ, and the Love of GOD in him. *For as he proceedeth both from the Father and the Son, both the Father and the Son Act by him ;* and therefore he is called the *Finger of God*, Luk. 11. 20. Matt. 12. 28. The Father acteth by him, in the Government of the World and all the Parts of it : The Son, in the Government of the Church and all particular Members in it. And whatsoever Blessings we receive from the Father thro' the Merits and Mediation of the Son, they are all convey'd to us by the Holy Ghost, which for that purpose abides us with us for ever, *Job. 14. 16.* It is HE, as proceeding from, and sent by our Saviour to do it, *That enlightens our Minds, and teacheth us all things necessary to our everlasting Peace, Eph. 1. 17. Isa. 11. 2. Job. 14. 26.* It is HE that keepeth us from Error, Heresy, and Schism, and guides us into all Truth, both in Faith and Manners,

ners, *Job.* 16. 13. It is HE that Sanctifies, renews, and regenerates us, and so makes us new Creatures and the Children of the most High GOD, *2 Theff.* 2. 13. *Job.* 3. 5, 6, 8. *Tit.* 3. 5. It is HE that beareth Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of GOD, *Rom.* 8. 16. It is HE that mortifies the Deeds of the Body, that quickens our Souls, and worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure, *Rom.* 8. 13. *Job.* 6. 63. *Phil.* 2. 13. It is HE that endues Men with Spiritual Gifts, suitable to the Work which GOD requires of them: To one he gives the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge; to another Faith, to another the Gift of Healing, to another the working of Miracles, to another Prophecy, to another the discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of Tongues, to another the Interpretation of Tongues, *1 Cor.* 12, 8, 9, 10. It is He that produceth in us Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, which are therefore said to be the Fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. And so is all manner of Goodness and Virtue, wheresoever it is found among Men, it all springs from the good Spirit of GOD, as from its Root; and from thence also receives all its Nourishment, Increase and Strength, *Eph.* 3. 16. It is He also that is our only Comforter, who supports and cheers our Spirits, by manifesting GOD's Love and Favour to us, lifting up the Light of his Countenance upon

us, keeping our Hearts fixed upon our promised Inheritance, filling us with firm Hopes, and constant Expectations of it, and so giving us Peace, and Joy, and Satisfaction of Mind in whatsoever happens here below, *Job. 16. 7. Acts 9. 31. Rom. 14. 17, &c.* In short, whatsoever Direction, Assistance or Power we have, or can have, of thinking, or desiring, or speaking, or doing any thing that is truly good, it is communicated to us by the Spirit of GOD our Saviour, and therefore is all comprehended under this one great Blessing which the Apostle here wisheth for in the last place, even the Communion of the Holy Ghost.

The several Parts of the Text being thus explain'd, we may easily observe the Meaning of the whole to be this, That the Apostle here prays that the *Corinthians* might have, *First*, the Grace of GOD the Son; that is, all the Mercy which He, as the Redeemer of Mankind, had purchased for them with his Blood: *Secondly*, that they might have the Love of GOD the Father; that is, all the Favours which He, as the supreme Governour of the World, could shew them: And *thirdly*, That they might have the Communion of the Holy Ghost; that is, all the Gifts, Graces and Comforts which He could communicate unto them, both from the Father and the Son: Or in short, that they might have all things, that GOD the Son, or GOD the Father, or GOD the Holy Ghost could do for them, according to their several Ways of working in the World;

World ; that is, all things that could any way contribute to make them compleatly happy. All which, *David* also, or the Church by him, prays for in the same Method and Order, saying, GOD, אלהים, be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his Face to shine upon us, *Psal.* 67. 1.

Now from hence we may learn, how necessary it is to believe in the most Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, One G O D: Seeing they all are pleased to concern themselves so much about us, and our Happiness depends upon them all. Hence we may learn to confide and trust on all and every one of these Divine Persons, for all things relating to our Happiness and Salvation. Hence we may learn what infinite Cause we have to praise and adore GOD for his infinite Goodness to us poor Mortals upon Earth, and to sing with the Choir of Heaven, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory, Isa.* 6. 3.

Hence we may learn, how much we are oblig'd to serve, and love, and please G O D the Father, G O D the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghost, who is thus infinitely gracious, and loving, and bountiful unto us. Hence we may learn, what great Reason our Church had to appoint, that at the End of every Psalm, as well as upon other Occasions, we should say or sing, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.* Hence, lastly, we may learn, wherefore our Church concludes

cludes her daily Prayers, as the Apostle doth this Epistle, with the Words of my Text, even because they contain in short, all that we can pray for, and are in effect the same with the Form which GOD himself prescribed, wherewith the Priests should Bless the People. On this wise, saith he, Ye shall Bless the Children of *Israel: The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his Face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace.* Numb. 6. 24, 25, 26. Where *Jehovah*, the Lord, is thrice repeated, and in the Original, hath in each place a several Accent, to denote, as the *Jews* themselves acknowledge, some great Mystery; which can be no other but the most Blessed Trinity. All the three Persons whereof are here called, every one, the Lord, *Jehovah*. The Father is placed first: But the Blessings bestow'd severally by each Person, are the same which are ascribed to them in my Text. And when the Priest pronounced this Blessing to the People (as we still do in the Visitation of the Sick) GOD promised that He himself would accordingly Bless them. And if you faithfully and devoutly receive it as ye ought, I do not question but he will do so now, upon my pronouncing in his Name, the same Blessing, according to this Apostolical Form in my Text. *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.*

F I N I S.

